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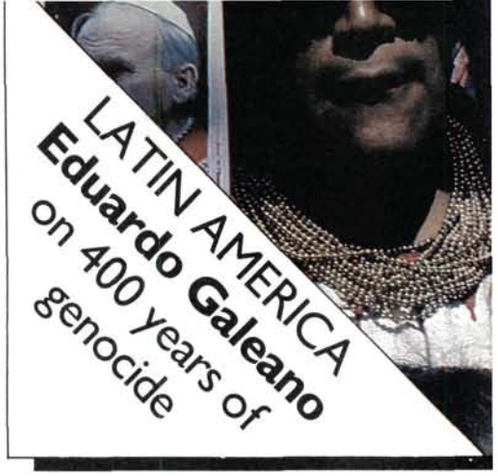
STATESMAN

What the Palestinians really want

MAY 1 0 1988



'Give me money'

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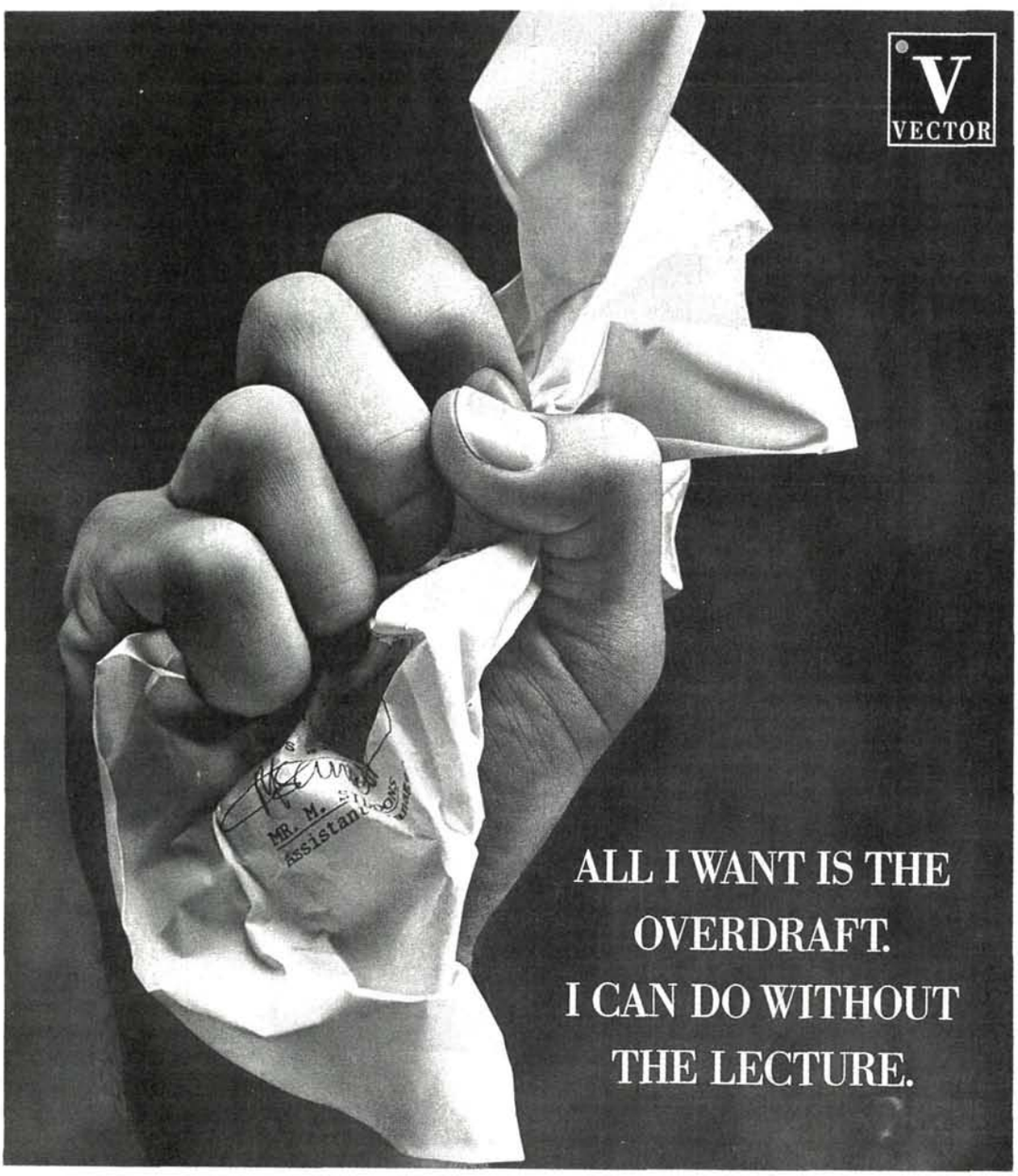

THE SELLING OF GREED

Illustration: Midland Bank Vector account advertisement

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CHILDREN, APARTHEID AND REPRESSION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

SATURDAY, 23 APRIL 1988
10am-5.30pm

City University, St John Street, EC1

The initiative to convene this conference arose from the International Conference held in Harare, Zimbabwe in September 1987, 'Children, Repression and the Law in Apartheid South Africa'. The Conference had a unique and profound effect in highlighting the scale of the apartheid regime's attack on the weakest and most vulnerable members of the South African population, namely the black children. The conference is aimed at all those whose work involves responsibility for the welfare, protection and education of children.

The specific objectives of the conference will be:

- To provide up-to-date information on the plight of the children in South and Southern Africa.
- To discuss the responsibility of professional groups in Britain and the ways in which they can support the children, and the wider campaign against apartheid.
- **Keynote Address:** Rev Beyers Naude, former General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches.
- **The Role of the Professions**

A large part of the Conference will be devoted to debate and discussion on the role of the Professions in Britain and internationally, including seminars in the following areas: Health; The Law; Education; Social Work; Religion; Probation Work; Architecture and Town Planning; Aid and Development; Youth and Community Services.

Speakers from Southern Africa include: Ishmail Ayob, Secretary of the Democratic Lawyers Association of South Africa; Nicholas Haysom, Human Rights Lawyer & Academic; Professor H M Coovadia, Executive Member of National Medical and Dental Association.

PATRONS

The Rt Rev Simon Barrington-Ward, Bishop of Coventry
Jocelyn Barrow OBE
Geoffrey Bindman (Solicitor, Chair of SATIS)
Dr Jim Birley (President of The Royal College of Psychiatrists)
Sir Douglas Black FRCP (Past President of Royal College of Physicians)
Victoria Brittain (Journalist, Editor of *Guardian* Third World Page)
Janey Buchan MEP
Sir Hugh Casson CH KCVO PPRA RDI
Diana Collins (IDAF Trustee)
Sir Donald Court (Past President of British Paediatric Association)
Lady Ewart-Biggs
Sam Galbraith FRCS, MP (President of the Medical Practitioners Union)
Lord Gifford QC
Elizabeth Gordon (Consultant Neurologist, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Medical Foundation)
Archbishop Trevor Huddleston
Robert Hughes MP (Chair of Anti-Apartheid Movement, Chair of BART)
Lord Elwyn Jones
Glenys Kinnock (Trustee of BART)
Dorothy Kuya (Director or Affirmata, an Equal Opportunities Training Agency, Member of Broadwater Farm Enquiry)
Joan Lestor MP
Peter McNeal (Deputy Chief Probation Officer of the Inner London Probation Service)
Bishop Hugh Montefiore
Prof. David Morley (Professor of Tropical Child Health, Institute of Child Health)
Harold Pinter
Anthony Sampson (Author)
Steven Sedley QC
The Rt Hon David Steel MP
The Rt Rev Jim Thompson, Bishop of Stepney
Prof P. Townsend
The Very Rev Alan Webster
Ben Whitaker (Director of the Minority Rights Group)
Dr Pamela Zinkin (Senior Lecturer, Institute of Health)

SPONSORS

Anti-Apartheid Movement
British Council of Churches
British Defence and Aid Fund
Catholic Fund for Overseas Development
Christian Aid
Community & Youth Workers Union
Confederation of Health Service Employees
Health Visitors Association
JUSTICE (British Section of International Commission of Jurists)
Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union
Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture
National Assocation of Local Government Officers
National Association of Probation Officers
National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Schoolteachers
National Association of Teachers in Further Education
National Union of Public Employees
National Union of Teachers
OXFAM
Scottish Council of Churches
Scottish Trades Union Congress
Southern Africa the Imprisoned Society
Trades Union Congress
Royal Institute of British Architects
War on Want

Registration Form

I/we wish to attend the Children, Apartheid and Repression Conference on Saturday, 23rd April 1988

Name .....

Organisation .....

Address .....

.....

I/we would like to attend the seminar session on

.....

I/we would like to see included a seminar for (please specify)

.....

I/We would like creche facilities ☐

I/We are unable to attend the Conference but would like to be kept informed of the work of the Harare Working Group (please tick box) ☐

Registration Fee

£10 organisations, £5 individual
£2.50 students, nurses, unwaged

I enclose a fee of .....

Donation of ..... Total sum of .....
(please make cheques payable to Harare Working Group)

Return completed application forms to:
Harare Working Group, c/o SATIS, 13 Mandela Street, London NW1 0DW.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol 115 No 2976 8 April 1988

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Doonesbury has been swallowed up in the Easter post. He'll be back next week.

NEXT WEEK

Are any Labour policies really going to be "reviewed"? *NS* reviews the review. Judith Williamson is back, and she has sent a postcard from New York promising to meet her deadline. Robin Blackburn on Euro-capitalism

Think of Britain

ON THE DIRECT orders of the Prime Minister, the Special Air Service were commanded to attack. It was made clear to the SAS that they were to take no prisoners. There was some concern at these instructions, and assurances were asked for and given that, provided the SAS followed the rules of engagement allowing for the use of force in self-defence, there would be no comeback from any subsequent police inquiry.

Gibraltar 1988? Perish the thought. This is James Adams's informed account, though highly condensed, of how rules of engagement were specially formulated eight years ago for the SAS's dramatic intervention in the siege of the Iranian embassy. The SAS men who invaded the embassy shot dead five of the six terrorist gunmen holding hostages inside, even though (as some hostages testified) they had thrown down their guns and were trying to surrender. The only terrorist to survive got out of the building by passing himself off as a hostage and was arrested by an ordinary copper. There was then a scuffle as SAS men tried to take him back inside the embassy.

There was an inquest, of course. James Adams's revelations in *Secret Armies* (Hutchinson 1987) were published too late to influence the jury's verdict. The coroner gave the jury robust assistance with the evidence, but even so they took 55 minutes to make up their minds; and as they took their seats, the coroner gave them an astonishing last-minute direction. He had offered them four alternatives, he said, of which justifiable homicide was the first: "I mentioned unlawful killing but I think it is essential that you consider the implications for the country if a verdict of unlawful killing is recorded if soldiers are sent in to do a specific job." They thought of Britain and returned a verdict of justifiable homicide.

Mrs Thatcher's government gloried in the courage and proficiency of the SAS then, just as they have now celebrated the three killings in Gibraltar. Why, they are part of Britain's enterprise culture, a crack outfit envied the world over and ready on past performance to privatise the brutal skills practised for the British state in Ireland, Oman, the Falklands and Gibraltar in the service of unpleasant employers elsewhere.

Others of us may take more pride in another institution born in Britain and even more active in the wider world: the human rights organisation, Amnesty International. Amnesty was born in 1961 of an article by lawyer Peter Benenson in the *Observer* and now has 700,000 members in 150 different countries and territories. Amnesty's aims are to stop the persecution, imprisonment, torture and killing of people for their politics, race, religion or ideas. Amnesty won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977 and is widely respected all over the world. But not, it seems, in Downing Street. Mrs Thatcher's PR man Bernard Ingham revealed to the media that she regards as "utterly disgraceful" Amnesty's modest request for a full and public account of the circumstances leading up to the three killings — an authoritative view which was promptly passed on to the British public with no discernible bias towards understanding.

Yet Amnesty's unpublished request is most assuredly justified by what's so far known about the three killings. The evidence thus far suggests that they were targeted by the security forces and killed without challenge. No attempt was made to capture them. They were apparently kept under surveillance for several weeks while they planned the bomb attack, but the security forces did not seek to arrest them during this time. Eye-witnesses have said that they were shot without warning and that one at least was shot several times while lying already injured upon the ground.

Amnesty International's request has to be seen not only in the light of what is known about the Gibraltar incident itself, but also in the context of the goverment's anti-terrorist policy in Ireland and the SAS's dubious role in that policy. In 1981, the then Northern Ireland Secretary James Prior stated: "What we need to do is to use the methods the terrorists use in order to overcome it [the IRA]." Amnesty International has been examining charges of a "shoot to kill" policy since then and has found more than 30 killings in Northern Ireland which were "compatible with allegations that they were deliberately planned" by the security forces. (Adams, incidentally, rejects the idea that the SAS orchestrated an assassination campaign, but writes of "isolated incidents of killing of IRA men who could as easily have been taken into custody".)

An inquest isn't capable of inquiring properly into the circumstances of the three killings. Amnesty is right to ask for a more thoroughgoing public inquiry. The three terrorists were evil people contemplating an evil crime. But it is time that the British government — and the public — realised that the real interests of the country are secured not by gunning such people down but by bringing them to justice. Then both the state and the people are subject to the rule of law. □

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DIARY

I once appeared on a BBC discussion programme with Edwina Currie and, rather to my horror, wound up liking her. For some months thereafter I would tell people not to believe everything they saw on *Spitting Image*: she might behave like a drunken fruitbat, but underneath it all she was really quite intelligent. No, really.

Since she became a minister this argument has been more and more difficult to sustain; and since her latest public health warning I've given up altogether. "The way young girls get cervical cancer is by being far too sexually active," she babbles. "I am more than happy to say virgins don't get it, nuns don't get it . . . The strongest possible piece of advice I could give to any young woman is: don't screw around, and don't smoke."

Unless Currie is advocating universal celibacy, it is hard to see the relevance of these nuns and virgins. They are not merely women who don't screw around: they don't screw *at all*. But a woman who has had only one lover in her entire life can still get cervical cancer. Currie appears not to know this; indeed she seems unaware that men might have anything to do with the problem at all. As some brave civil servant should whisper to the minister, it takes two to tango.

○

"Who cares who killed Roger Ackroyd?" Edmund Wilson asked. I am beginning to feel the same way about the question of whether Roger Hollis, the former head of the security service, was the Fifth Man. Last Sunday's three-hour "trial" of the old boy on television was as pointless (and point-missing) as all those books claiming to name Jack the Ripper. In both cases, what ought to matter is not whodunnit but why. The obsession of certain authors with "identifying" the Ripper springs from their sense that, once he has a local habitation and a name, his uniqueness will be exposed for all to see. As long as he is anonymous, he could be any man or indeed everyman; a much more troubling thought, and therefore one on which our minds aren't allowed to linger. So it is with Hollis. One could argue that any security service which trains its staff to see enemies everywhere is doomed anyway; those who live by paranoia will surely die by it. But the idea is trampled underfoot by the thundering hooves of Chapman Pincher and Nigel West as — with a triumphant "View Halloo!" — they charge off in pursuit of another "traitor". It is (to mix metaphors shamelessly) far more reassuring to locate the "one bad apple", or five bad apples for that matter, than to suggest that the whole greengrocer's shop is structurally unsound.

○

Anyway, I was glad to see that the "jury" roped in for last weekend's trial treated Chapman Pincher's evidence with the scorn it deserved. A couple of years ago I had to spend a morning with Pincher at his house in Berkshire. Throughout our conversation I found it impossible to rid my mind of E.P. Thompson's metaphor of Pincher as a grand public urinal at which the High and the Mighty leaked — always "in the public interest", of course. As I gazed at his lugubrious face I imagined it in porcelain, with Victorian brass fittings; rather stained from years of service in gentlemen's clubs, where it had been subjected to the full force of post-prandial Whitehall bladders, but still perfectly serviceable.

It is a mistake, though, to assume that Pincher knows his stuff. A friend of mine who had just left MI5 was summoned to lunch with him. The friend was startled by how little Pincher knew about the service, on which he was supposed to be such an authority. The conclusion is simple: he is only as good as the last person to urinate all over him. Thus in one book he will say that Tom Driberg was a KGB agent; in the next book, after being doused by someone else, he insists Driberg was really working for MI5.

Without official guidance, he has to fall back on another technique. More than 30 years ago he wrote a letter revealing how he had researched an *Express* article about the British bomb tests. "This I confess was sheer guesswork," he admitted. "The fact is that if my guess about what is going to happen in these new trials is correct, it was something of a fluke."

○

A brief dismissal of Mensa as a "right-wing group" in this column recently has produced some interesting correspondence. One reader says that during his first (and only) year of membership, in 1983-4, the most radical outside contributor to the *Mensa Newsletter* was Bryan Magee of the SDP. In the same period there were articles by Prof. John Fremlin (advocate of nuclear power), Madsen "Mad" Pirie (Adam Smith Institute, zealous privatiser), Prof. Richard Lynn (IQ test fanatic), Prof. Anthony Flew (anti-comprehensive education, friend of Thatcher), Peter Young (former leader of Federation of Conservative Students) and many others of the same stripe. My informant, fed up with the "stockbroker infantilism", left after one year.

Another reader points out that, though you have to be pretty stupid to want to join Mensa, it is an elite of sorts: "rather in the way of the old observation about great footballers being a rare breed — they have to be intelligent enough to be able to play well and daft enough to think that football is important".

I ought to declare an interest here. I too — I wince as I write it — was once in Mensa. I was about 16 at the time. I joined out of youthful curiosity. I attended one meeting. It was hell: bores galore. I didn't renew my membership. Not a large skeleton in the cupboard, perhaps, by Waldheim standards; but pretty shaming all the same.

○

The latest group to pitch into the case of Wheen vs BBC — which may yet rival Jarndyce vs Jarndyce — is the Freedom Association. Three pages of the April edition of their magazine *Freedom Today* are given over to this gripping subject. I was especially touched by the following thumbnail sketch: "Francis Wheen is a left-wing columnist on the radical *New Statesman* magazine and as such is a colleague of the now notorious Duncan Campbell." How very true.

○

For the benefit of any readers who are still confused by the intricacies of the American presidential election, here is a glossary explaining some of the phrases that are used:

From the *Independent*, 28 March: "A stop-Jesse movement among white politicians could all too easily be interpreted as racially motivated. It is up to Mr Jackson to offer his party a trade-off, in which his support for a ticket of, say, Dukakis-Gore can be parlayed into practical and realistic commitments to the members of the rainbow coalition." Translation: Jesse Jackson is black.

From the *Independent*, 31 March: "The traditional wisdom is that another liberal, ethnic ticket, weighed down with Jacksonian baggage, would be tantamount to electoral suicide for the Democrats." Translation: Jesse Jackson is black.

From the *Guardian*, 28 March: "Jesse Jackson is unelectable." Translation: Listen, how many times do we have to tell you? The man is b-l-a-c-k.

From the *Guardian*, 28 March: "Dukakis comes from the wrong part of the country, preaches the wrong liberal message, warms few traditional Democratic hearts, and doesn't reach out to the floating voter compellingly enough. But, almost by default, he is the man in the frame; and he has three months now to fill it."

Translation: Dukakis may be just as unelectable, he may even be a bit swarthy. But he isn't black.

Francis Wheen

ROGER WOODDIS

The only word

"They're so clearly wrong that the only word is wicked." — The Bishop of Durham, on the government's social security changes

When someone raises a dissenting voice
Against the things that violate his creed,
The sound is drowned by those who value choice
Above the drab indecency of need
And bid us count our blessings and rejoice,
For nothing now is holier than greed.
He is an Antichrist who dares to look
At certain sermons quoted in the Book.

What Dr Jenkins fails to understand
Is that to love the lowly is a crime.
(The Bible hasn't up till now been banned,
Though doubtless that will happen, given time.)
The ostrich hides his head beneath the sand,
For fear of hearing Durham's church bells chime;
Our lord should call the cleric to account
Who rates the rabble-rouser on the Mount.

The proper role for those who wear the cloth
Is not to wear their hearts upon their sleeves
And, seeing wrong, to wax exceeding wrath,
But to support the punter who believes
That there is charity in Fairbairn's froth.
St Luke's lone traveller set upon by thieves
Was not the only one to learn the score:
The rich are rich because the poor are poor.

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Poll tax is a liability for Tories

THE GOVERNMENT may be in deeper trouble with the poll tax than even it realises, according to recent opinion polls carried out by NOP. They show that in the government's 50 most marginal seats, its most important supporters are among the most disaffected by the tax. (The collation and analysis of the polls have been carried out by David Cowling of ITN.)

In February, NOP gave estimates to the people they interviewed of how much they would pay under the poll tax regime, and asked them whether they thought this was fair or too high. Sixty per cent of C2s (skilled manual) thought that they would be paying too much, as did 38 per cent of Conservative voters. When NOP asked people whether they blamed the government or local councils for high rates, they found that respondents apportioned blame about equally; but the government was blamed relatively more by women, the middle aged and C2s — key groups in securing Conservative victories since 1979.

In the country at large, poll tax is massively and increasingly unpopular. According to a Gallup poll in January, 61 per cent of voters think it's a bad idea (compared with 39 per cent two years ago), and only 25 per cent approve of it (compared with 45 per cent two years ago). The government's euphemism of "community charge" steadily refuses to stick. Seventy seven per cent of people spontaneously use the phrase "poll tax" and only 2 per cent use "community charge".

Despite anecdotal evidence and warnings to the contrary, people in Scotland have not stopped registering as electors because of the poll tax. According to the Scottish Secretary, the number of registered voters in Scotland fell by only 0.69 per cent between 1987 and 1988. According to a survey by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, the number in England fell by 1 per cent.

But pity Bill Anderson, the regional assessor for Tayside, who addressed the inaugural conference of the Association of Electoral Administrators last month. As Cowling reports: "He had no satisfactory definition of a full time student, nor even a statutory definition of what is a residence. His staff will have to check each of the 10,500 lock-up garages in Dundee to discover whether they are being used mainly for business or domestic use. They will also have to classify the mentally handicapped between those who are congenitally impaired and thus exempt from the tax, and victims of accidents, who are not."

Jolyon Jenkins

Stockholm-London arms collusion

A CONSPIRACY between the UK Ministry of Defence and the Swedish government to circumvent domestic Swedish arms export embargoes has been revealed in Stockholm.

The revelations came to light when Sigfrid Akselson, a former director of the Swedish state-owned ordnance subsidiary FFV (United Manufacturing Works) decided to "come clean" on details of subterfuges employed by the company when he worked there.

Present FFV Executive Borje Olsson has been forced to confirm Akselson's information.

In highly embarrassing detail, FFV has admitted a whole series of lucrative arms deals done through London over the past two decades, with clients beginning with Australia in 1966 and continuing with the sale of arms and ammunition to nations in the Middle East war zone, with the UK MoD's silent support.

Sigfrid Akselson headed FFV's international sales drive on recoil-less anti-tank weapon systems from the beginning of the 50s and was head of its special export division during the 60s.

He says he can't keep silent while the government tries to blame the weapons industry for decisions made with the full knowledge and approval of a succession of Swedish governments.

When, in May 1966, Australia sent 4,300 men to Vietnam, Swedish domestic legislation prohibiting the export of arms to belligerent nations automatically went into effect. An embargo was placed on further arms exports to Australia.

"The Australians were livid and Sweden risked making itself an impossible trading-partner on the international weapons market. For example, one wonders if it would have been possible for Sweden to sell Australia submarines [as in a recent deal] if they hadn't sorted things out in 1966."

At a press conference in Eskilstuna, Sweden, FFV's Olsson admitted: "During 1966 Australia ordered two types of ammunition from FFV. The orders had to be cancelled when the government implemented an export embargo because of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war."

Olsson said similar quantities of Swedish munitions were sent instead to the Ministry of Defence in London for forwarding to the Australians, in a deliberate action to by-pass Swedish regulations and to defuse a diplomatic impasse between Stockholm and Canberra.

"Following an urgent top-level meeting in mid-66 with [Sweden's] then defence minister, Sven Andersson, at which he gave us orders to placate the Australians at any price, our then director-general, Gunnar Svard, went to London with FFV sales executive, Charles Davidsson, for a meeting arranged by the [UK] Ministry of Defence and the Australian embassy in London."

Pursuant to that meeting, FFV was able to keep the Australians supplied in secret throughout 1967.

Details have been confirmed in Australia by former prime minister Malcolm Fraser (who was minister for the army in 1966) and Peter Young, Australian military attaché in Saigon at the time.

FFV's current director-general, Rune Nyman, confirmed that deals done throughout and since the 60s were legally within the framework of a secret British-Swedish agreement entered into in 1963 (the contract ended in 1984) which allowed the on-pass of Swedish arms, ammunition, weapons systems etc. to a list of Commonwealth and other countries which would never have been approved to receive direct exports from Sweden.

Nyman said, "In 1963 it was an extremely important agreement, worth the equivalent of 60 per cent of FFV's annual turnover. The War Material Inspectorate and the government were fully informed, as always."

Roy S. Carson

Stranger than fiction

ONLY the *Sun* believed it. Sent a copy of our April Fool piece last week on Neil Kinnock's new "tough bastard" image, they swallowed it hook, line and sinker, and stuck it onto the end of an article headlined NEIL IN RAGE AT PRESCOTT JOB GRAB. True to form, they didn't attribute it, and

● **A Labour Party campaign memo has told "soppy and sentimental" Mr Kinnock to adopt a new "tough bastard" image to win back voters.**

didn't check it out. The *Guardian*, more circumspect, left a puzzled message on the editor's answerphone but went no further.

Just in case any doubt remains, we're happy to concede the article was 100 per cent false. In particular, Walter Zuchinni of Yale University is, as far as we know, totally fictitious.

Not so Prof. Ray Bull of Glasgow College. He definitely exists, but research he has done (with Caroline Hawkes) is almost as strange as Zuchinni's.

Bull and Hawkes showed people photographs of obscure back bench Conservative and Labour MPs — without saying that they were MPs — and asked them what party they thought the people photographed would support. They found that the subjects strongly agreed in their assessment of the political allegiances of the people in the photographs. They then went on to ask the subject how they assessed the intelligence, sincerity, and physical attractiveness of the MPs.

On the whole, the Conservative supporters thought that the MPs they thought were Conservatives looked intelligent, and that the "Labour" MPs looked stupid. Alarmingly, *Labour supporters thought exactly the same*. Similarly, both Labour and Conservative voters also thought that the "Conservative" MPs looked more attractive than "Labour" MPs. There was no difference in how the subjects judged sincerity.

This was almost unbelievable; so Bull and two other colleagues tightened up the experiment and tried it again. They got virtually the same results. This is all rather worrying for Labour. If they put forward attractive, intelligent, candidates, even their own supporters will think they are actually Tories. But people will presumably be unhappy about voting for candidates who look too repulsive. The trick, it seems, is to find people who look ugly, but not that ugly.

Jolyon Jenkins

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0.3% vote for Owenites

LABOUR has stopped the rot in local council by-elections, gaining as many seats as it lost between 11 February and 24 March. This is fairly cool comfort, however, as both the Conservatives and the Social and Liberal Democrats continue to clock up net gains (independent or non-political councillors suffered heavy losses).

The only other satisfaction was the miserable showing for Dr David Owen's rump SDP. It lost the single seat that it defended (Vale Royal) to Labour: won a mere 62 votes in its first outing against the merged SLD, which won the seat in Mansfield from the Tories with a vote of 679; and amassed the grand total of 0.3 per cent of the vote in our compilation of three-cornered contests.
The full gains and losses table is as follows:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Conservative	28	7	10	31
Labour	14	5	5	14
SLD	10	5	9	14
SDP	1	1	0	0
Others	11	10	3	4

Thirty-six of these contests were three-cornered. In these wards 66,325 votes were cast:

Labour	19,723	29.7
Conservative	26,243	39.6
SLD	18,072	27.2
SDP	187	0.3
Others	2,100	3.2

These totals are not very different from the last Scoreboard, but show that the SLD is still preforming strongly at the grassroots, despite behaving like a headless turkey nationally. The Tories are still doing well, although the pace of their gains may have slackened a little. And Labour is still doing badly in London — three of its five losses were in the capital (all to the SLD).

Athough the totals were little changed, the figures belie the turbulence in the undergrowth, with seats changing hands in two-fifths of all by-elections. ●

COUNCIL SCOREBOARD

11 February

Windsor & Maidenhead DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Borders SRC	SNP GAIN (Con)

18 February

Lliw Valley WDC	CON GAIN (Lab)
Amber Valley DC	CON GAIN (Lib)
Cherwell DC	CON GAIN (Lib)

25 February

N. Warwickshire DC	LAB GAIN (Ind)
Hackney LBC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Southwark LBC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Brecknock WDC	LIB GAIN (Ind)

3 March

Crewe & Nantwich DC	LAB GAIN (SLD)
Braintree DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Stratford upon Avon DC	SLD GAIN (Con)

10 March

Barking & Dagenham LBC	LAB GAIN (Ind)
Cornwall CC	LAB GAIN (Ind)
S. Oxfordshire DC	SLD GAIN (Con)
Highland SRC	SNP GAIN (Ind)

17 March

West Lindsey DC	CON GAIN (SLD)
Ribble Valley DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Richmondshire DC	CON GAIN (Ind)

24 March

Vale Royal DC	LAB GAIN (SDP)
Hyndburn DC	CON GAIN (Lab)
Medina DC	CON GAIN (SLD)
Scarborough DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Waltham Forest LBC	SLD GAIN (Lab)
Mansfield DC	SLD GAIN (Con)
N. Kesteven DC	IND GAIN (Con)

Iraqi chemical warfare marks a turning point

ON THE AFTERNOON of Tuesday 16th March, waves of Soviet-built Sukhoi fighter-bombers flown by Iraqi pilots attacked the large town of Halabja. But this was not just another ordinary day in the seemingly endless Gulf War. For Halabja is not in Iran, but is in northern Iraq. And the attack involved poison gases. Halabja is a Kurdish city with a normal civilian population of some 30,000, swollen by refugees to more than twice that size and recently captured by the Iranians. By Tuesday evening some 4,000 of the citizens of Halabja were lying dead where they had fallen, struck down by the chemicals; another 6,000 were injured — injuries that developed slowly over the next couple of days — severe burns to face, thighs, arms, stomach; sickness and blurring of vision, weeping eyes and chest pains that made breathing difficult.

The Iranians were not slow to see the significance of what happened, and quickly brought western journalists to the site of the attack; their accounts of those struck dead by the gas filled the quality British papers for the next few days. But the western governmental responses have been astonishingly muted. For to acknowledge the event must be to censure Iraq and raise questions about the nature and direction of the war the Iraqi government is waging. Yet such silence implicitly tolerates a most dangerous military escalation which must not go unchallenged.

The first world war, with its hundred thousand deaths and million casualties from gas warfare in the trenches, resulted in the Geneva Protocol of 1925 banning the use in war of "asphyxiating and poisonous substances". It has become one of the most durable of conventions regulating the conduct of war and controlling the weapons used. The Protocol has been almost universally ratified — Iraq itself did so as early as 1931 — and it has been almost universally accepted.

The Italians used chemicals against Haile Selassie's forces in Ethiopia in the 1930s, to widespread international criticism. In the 1939-45 war, the allied forces manufactured and stockpiled slightly updated versions of the first world war gases — notably mustard. And the Germans invented a whole new class of chemicals, the nerve gases. Much more poisonous than anything that had gone before, they had one other deadly significance. You can protect yourself against the older weapons, like mustard, by breathing through a filter in a gas mask, and with various types of skin creams. But you don't have to breathe the nerve gases for them to kill; they can be absorbed through the skin, and a minute quantity is enough to paralyse the junctions between nerve and muscle leading to almost instant death.

In the years since 1945, newer and even deadlier nerve gases have been developed. The use of harassing substances — tear gases like CS — has become widespread. The Americans used vast quantities of both CS and chemical defoliants in Vietnam to devastating effect, but argued that because these substances were not directly poisonous to humans they were not in breach of the Protocol. The fragile 1925 accord appeared to be holding, and formed the basis on which a tortuous set of negotiations in Geneva has been under way for some years aimed at banning research, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons too.

Nonetheless, against a constantly reiterated suspicion of Soviet intentions and chemical weapons capacities, the Reagan administration has embarked on a massive chemical rearmament programme, with some $8 billion set aside over the decade to replace existing stocks with a new generation of so-called binary nerve gases, intended for stockpiling and if necessary use in Europe. The Thatcher government keeps dropping dark hints about the needs for such weapons; the French seem quietly to have restarted their own development programme.

This is the background against which the mass poisonings at Halabja must be set. Despite initial Iraqi denials, it is not in doubt that chemicals were used. What needs to be ascertained — and fast — is exactly *what* was used. The accounts given by the injured evacuated from the town speak of two bombings — first with explosives, followed shortly after by gas.

As evening fell and the planes left, the civilians of Halabja came out of hiding and began to move towards the hills. As they did so they began to feel the sickness and burning. Their flight was through fields, ditches and roads littered with dead bodies of those caught in the gas. The symptoms experienced by those who survived and fled are characteristically those of mustard gas poisoning.

But what killed those who did not escape? The speed of their deaths makes it clear it was not mustard. The Iranians have spoken of cyanide. However, cyanide is light and disperses fast — scarcely appropriate for dropping out of planes. It looks much more likely that this was a nerve gas attack. If so, the implications are very grave indeed.

This is of course not the first time the Iraqis have used chemical weapons in the Gulf war. But this is the first use on such a scale and against civilians — *Iraqi* civilians at that. For it seems clear that the target in Halabja was not so much the Iranian troops, who now have some protective clothing, but the Kurdish population. This fits in well with Gulf conflict; more even than the latest atrocities against the Kurdish population by the Iraqi regime. There is a danger that they will provide the green light for the widespread use of chemicals in other simmering conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere, justifying the Israeli nuclear strategy as

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what now seems to be the characteristic use of poison weapons — not in conflict between two well-equipped conventional armies, but by a technologically advanced force against civilian populations or guerilla forces. This has been the real history of such chemicals ever since the 1930s.

The deaths at Halabja are thus more than an isolated incident in the long-running and bloody a deterrent, and sabotaging the Geneva disarmament negotiations.

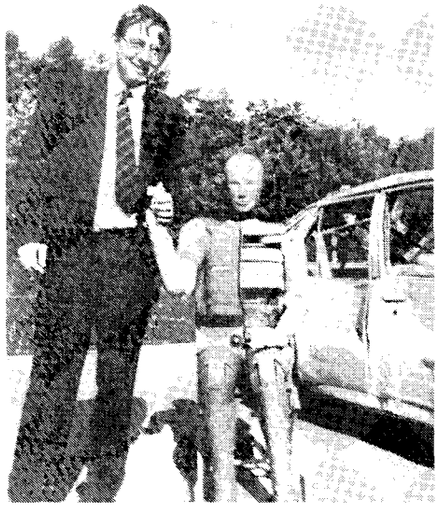
Much attention has focused on where the Iraqis obtained their chemical weapons. The truth is that, granted the technical skills and chemical production plants otherwise used, they are not hard to make. What is needed is a war crimes tribunal to hear and judge evidence on Halabja and other genocidic acts against the Kurdish population and unequivocal international legal action to condemn the flagrant Iraqi breach of the Geneva Protocol before that fragile restraint on even greater horrors is finally discarded.

Steven Rose

The author is Professor of Biology at the Open University.

If the caption fits

No 62



Above, Mr Peter Bottomley (who he?), Under-Secretary of State at the Dept. of Transport, holds on to the British part of Eurosid, a new dummy (with American head and legs, a Dutch abdomen, British shoulders, thorax and arms, and a French pelvis), designed to test what happens in sideswipe car collisions. Captions or speech/thinks bubbles from the dummies on a postcard please by Monday 18 April. £10 book token for the winner.

No 60: Winner

Model (left): "Personally I prefer the *male* condom." (*Charis Isted, Mortlake.*) Runner-up: "I hope we don't get a hard-on." (*David Beaumont, Glasgow.*)

Kremlin comes clean on Voznesensky

AN UNNOTICED side effect of Mikhail Gorbachev's recent visit to Yugoslavia is that the Kremlin has finally unlocked some of the secrets of a murky scandal known as the Leningrad Affair.

Nearly 40 years ago, Nikolai Voznesensky, Stalin's bright, young deputy premier, just disappeared. There was no clue to his whereabouts until after Stalin's death. It was then revealed that, nearly two years after he disappeared, Voznesensky "and others" appeared in court, on trumped up charges. The verdict was never published, but reference books gave Voznesensky's date of death as 1950. In his memoirs, Khrushchev recorded: "I was never really in on the case myself, but I admit that I may have signed the sentencing order. If Stalin thought it necessary, we would put our signatures on it without even looking at it. That's what was meant by collective sentencing. I assume that the charges were Russian nationalism and opposition to the Central Committee."

Western scholars have since surmised that Stalin's rift with Yugoslavia was the real issue. All the victims had been friends of Tito's main sponsor, the former Leningrad party boss, Andrei Zhdanov, who died of a well timed heart attack in 1948.

Voznesensky's other crime was to be too clever by half. Though he was younger than some of those functionaries who stayed in power right up until the Gorbachev era, he was running the whole programme of post war reconstruction of Soviet industry. "He gave the impression of being an orderly, cultured, conscientious and thoughtful man," the Yugoslav dissident Milovan Djilas wrote, after seeing Voznesensky at a Kremlin dinner.

For the first time, the Soviet press has now said exactly who was put on trial. There were eight men and one woman in all. At least one survived several years in prison; five are known to have been shot. All have been completely cleared by the commission appointed by Gorbachev to reinvestigate the Stalinist repression.

A bizarre detail has emerged from the short announcement of these findings. The commission had intended, as a formality, to restore the victims to full membership of the Communist party, until they discovered that some of them had never been expelled in the first place. It seems that, even as he stepped in front of the firing squad, Voznesensky retained his formal voting rights as a member of the party's ruling Politburo.

Andy McSmith

The Dalai Lama: Smile Freedom

AT THE end of his meeting with journalists in London, Tibet's spiritual and political leader in exile, the Dalai Lama, walked around the room taking each person by the hand and looking for a brief moment into their eyes.

Never have I seen a roomful of journalists and photographers warm so quickly to a political figure: no country could hope for a better ambassador. The Dalai Lama gives the impression of a shrewd, compassionate and honest individual with a formidable, patient determination. He's needed it: the Chinese marched into his country in 1950 when he was only 15 (and already the Dalai Lama). One night in 1959 he secretly fled over the border to India dressed in a soldier's uniform and has never returned.

Around one million out of six million Tibetans are estimated to have been killed, tortured or imprisoned by the occupying Chinese forces: repression was particularly acute during the Cultural Revolution but still continues. The Tibetan uprisings this year and last were simply the most publicised of years of rumbling resistance.

Sinification has involved attempts to wipe out the Tibetan language, culture, and perhaps above all, Buddhism. But in a country where prayer flags hang in every village and public teachings are an occasion of family festivity, religion has become a symbol of the right to remain Tibetan. It is only in the West that the sight of monks leading protest marches is a surprise.

Despite everything the Dalai Lama also laughs a lot. When asked what hope he forsees for Hong Kong when it passes into Chinese hands he chuckles: the British government has refused to meet him while he's here and the Foreign Office forbade him from calling a press conference on political questions — Hong Kong is the most delicate area of Sino-British relations. We're very concerned about them, he says: six million is not a lucky number when it comes to Chinese rule.

He manages to joke about Mrs Thatcher's refusal to meet him even though Britain, with its long history of involvement in the region, is seen as the best placed country to mediate. In fact, the British government has managed to wriggle into the position of recognising Tibet as a separate country — while recognising China's right to occupy it.

The very format of the gathering indicated the Tibetans' mixture of pragmatism and humour. They abided by the ruling and didn't call a press conference. Instead they let it be known well in advance that His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama would be here and when the phones started ringing, granted interviews. But demand was so great — increased perhaps, by the clumsy attempt to muzzle him — that there had to be "an informal meeting", an oft repeated phrase.

When I asked a monk about the red and yellow reflected everywhere — in their robes, in sashes around the room — I expected an answer weighty with Buddhist symbolism. Yellow and red are the cheapest colour dyes, he said, and as monks have little money, it became traditional. So, he smiled, I suppose you could say it is a symbol of modesty.

Jane Dibblin

Edward Pearce is on holiday. He will be back next week.

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Video laws get tightened further

THE VIDEO Recordings Act, passed in an absurd flurry of moral panic over video nasties in 1985, has just been toughened up further — apparently at the request of the people it most tightly circumscribes. A new amendment gives trading standards officers (appointed by local authorities) the same powers as police to enter video shops to ensure that the Act is being enforced.

The change has been made because of concern felt by some MPs — including the Prime Minister — over the fact that since the Act came into force in 1985 there have been only two prosecutions. The British Board of Film Classification, which has statutory responsibility for video, and the British Videogram Association, which represents distributors have both lobbied for the new measure.

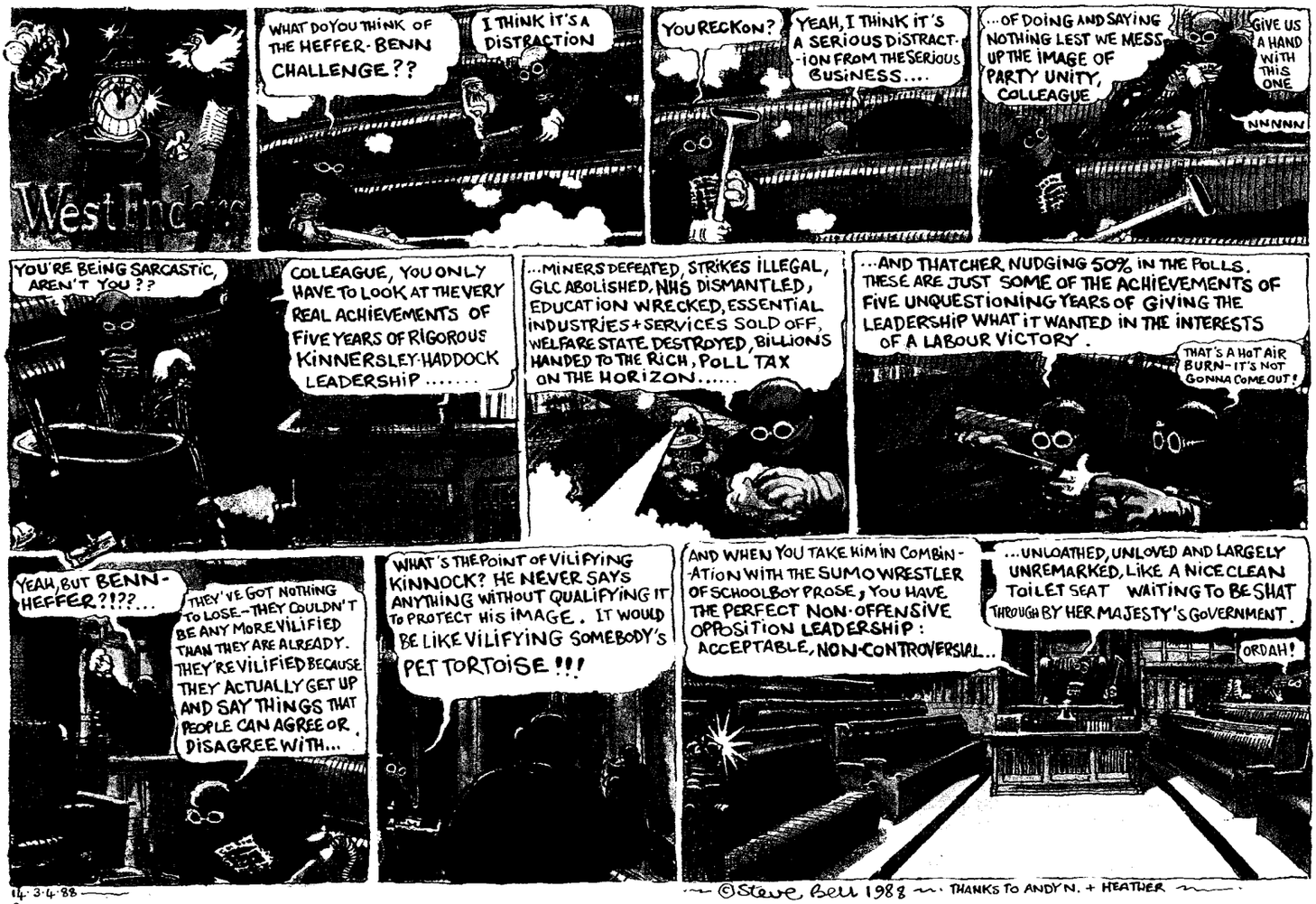
According to Ken Penry, deputy director of the BBFC, the problems have less to do with video nasties (a problem that was always more apparent than real) than with other aspects of the Act. There are, he says, two major enforcement problems: the renting or selling of "15" and "18" certificated videos to the under-aged, and the circulation of uncertificated tapes. Until the certification of the vast backlog of tapes is completed in September there are still a few older titles without certificates which are in circulation legally, but Penry feels that a few which should by now have been certificated have slipped through the net. He is, however, convinced that the "video nasty" problem has now been cleared up; the uncertificated tapes are more likely to be foreign language tapes from the mass of shops serving the ethnic communities, tapes of films whose year of production may be unknown to renter and distributor alike. As far as the renting of 15s and 18s to the under-aged is concerned, Penry feels that the large, specialist shops are more likely to take a responsible attitude than the burgeoning mass of smaller outlets like garages, newsagents and corner shops.

According to Norman Abbott of the British Videogram Association, "the majority of shops do toe the line but a significant minority don't, and quite honestly the guilty parties haven't had to worry much until now. However, the trading standards officers are going to be able to devote far greater resources to the problem than the police could spare. They already have to visit video shops twice a year as part of their duties, they've already seen abuses of the Act in the course of their visits, and many are keen to get going on this one".

According to a recent *Time Out* article, there are at least a million hard-core (and thus illegal) videos in circulation in Britain. This impression is certainly reinforced by the salacious small (and not so small) ads now littering the back pages of many video magazines. Penry thinks this figure may be an overestimate and that many of the videos advertised do in fact carry 18R certificates (these are for videos that may be sold only in licenced sex shops). But, he says "we do keep an eye on these advertisements and if we see anything which might contravene the law we bring it to the attention of the police. However, we would like to see an increase in the number of 18R outlets, and perhaps a change in the law which makes it illegal for 18R material to be sent through the post. We think it very important that as much of the sex-video trade as possible be kept above the counter, otherwise this only facilitates an illegal undergrowth."

There is also an increasing clampdown on salacious advertising for videos — in video magazines, on posters, and on the covers of the boxes in which videos are sold. According to Abbott: "We are worried that some of this lurid material is bringing the industry into disrepute." To counter this, there is now a Video Advertising Review Committee which meets every Monday to look at the advertising of all 15 and 18 certificated videos. This is made up of representatives of the three major video magazines and the distributors, with observers from the BBFC and the Advertising Standards Authority. The idea is to stamp out lurid advertising by means of voluntary self-regulation. The BBFC tends to play down the fact that the regulation is voluntary, possibly because it fears that this will reduce its credibility. The extraordinary lengths to which the regulatory bodies will go to deal with what are essentially minor problems show just how deep is their fear that another moral panic is just around the corner.

Julian Petley


WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE HEFFER-BENN CHALLENGE??
I THINK IT'S A DISTRACTION
YOU RECKON?
YEAH, I THINK IT'S A SERIOUS DISTRACT-ION FROM THE SERIOUS BUSINESS....
...OF DOING AND SAYING NOTHING LEST WE MESS UP THE IMAGE OF PARTY UNITY, COLLEAGUE
GIVE US A HAND WITH THIS ONE
NNNNN
YOU'RE BEING SARCASTIC, AREN'T YOU??
COLLEAGUE, YOU ONLY HAVE TO LOOK AT THE VERY REAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF FIVE YEARS OF RIGOROUS KINNERSLEY-HADDOCK LEADERSHIP.....
...MINERS DEFEATED, STRIKES ILLEGAL, GLC ABOLISHED, NHS DISMANTLED, EDUCATION WRECKED, ESSENTIAL INDUSTRIES + SERVICES SOLD OFF, WELFARE STATE DESTROYED, BILLIONS HANDED TO THE RICH, POLL TAX ON THE HORIZON.....
...AND THATCHER NUDGING 50% IN THE POLLS. THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FIVE UNQUESTIONING YEARS OF GIVING THE LEADERSHIP WHAT IT WANTED IN THE INTERESTS OF A LABOUR VICTORY.
THAT'S A HOT AIR BURN - IT'S NOT GONNA COME OUT!
YEAH, BUT BENN-HEFFER?!??...
THEY'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE - THEY COULDN'T BE ANY MORE VILIFIED THAN THEY ARE ALREADY. THEY'RE VILIFIED BECAUSE THEY ACTUALLY GET UP AND SAY THINGS THAT PEOPLE CAN AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH...
WHAT'S THE POINT OF VILIFYING KINNOCK? HE NEVER SAYS ANYTHING WITHOUT QUALIFYING IT TO PROTECT HIS IMAGE. IT WOULD BE LIKE VILIFYING SOMEBODY'S PET TORTOISE!!!
AND WHEN YOU TAKE HIM IN COMBIN-ATION WITH THE SUMO WRESTLER OF SCHOOLBOY PROSE, YOU HAVE THE PERFECT NON-OFFENSIVE OPPOSITION LEADERSHIP: ACCEPTABLE, NON-CONTROVERSIAL...
...UNLOATHED, UNLOVED AND LARGELY UNREMARKED, LIKE A NICE CLEAN TOILET SEAT WAITING TO BE SHAT THROUGH BY HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.
ORDAH!
14·3·4·88
©Steve Bell 1988 ~ THANKS TO ANDY N. + HEATHER

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BEN PIMLOTT

Labour's unstable electoral college: enter John Prescott, stage soft-left

IN LABOUR'S kaleidoscope, it doesn't take much to produce a new pattern. The slightest jolt, and the shapes and colours look startlingly different. Yet the elements themselves and the range of possibilities is exactly as before.

So it is with the latest twist in the leadership contest. Does the John Prescott candidature alter the picture completely? At first glance, yes. But on closer inspection, the balance of forces remains much the same. First there was just Neil and Roy, against the background of a mild rumble of well-contained discontent, visible only in occasional volcanic eruptions, as in the almost-forgotten Dave Warburton affair (the GMB union official sacked for his pains). Then we had Neil and Roy versus pugnacious John, until John was persuaded that he lacked the support for a credible campaign and withdrew. Then there were Neil and Roy against Tony and Eric, and the prospect of an episode of ritualistic mutual abuse. Now we have the defiant if somewhat shamefaced re-entry, stage soft-left, of pugnacious John.

What does it all signify? Not a great deal, apart from further evidence of the undercurrent of unrest, part justified, part merely seasonal, that was there in the first place. Attempts will certainly be made on all sides to dignify it as a battle of philosophies. Tony Benn has selflessly declared his intention to fight purely on the issues, and for socialism, a cause for which he merely happens *pour le moment* to be the standard bearer; pugnacious John, as his brighter Christian-namesake has cruelly put it, is fighting for a job description; while the Kinnock/Hattersley camp are putting it about that the whole thing provides a heaven-sent opportunity to drive home the message, as much to the public as to the party, that new-broom consumerist labourism is here to stay. None of it, however, is very convincing.

Policy will of course come into it, providing symbolic citadels for which the warring factions will strive. The essential language, however, will be, as always, tribal. Everybody will want to situate him or herself on the left, and the discussion will be about consistency, as of cheeses. Yet "soft" and "hard" in practice have as much to do with philosophy as Philadelphia and mouse. Rather, they are about kinship, loyalty, alliance, ambition and expectation.

The outcome in voting terms may be apparent quite early in the summer, and if so interest will subside. There remains the small, but interesting, possibility that Prescott might run Hattersley close or even conceivably beat him. Should the first occur, the media will have a chance to gorge itself, though not necessarily to the existing leadership's — or even the Labour Party's — disadvantage. Should the second happen, it would be deeply embarrassing to Neil Kinnock, who would be shackled to a running mate he would be known to distrust, and that could do Labour serious harm. Such a possibility provides the one overriding reason for anybody who seriously wishes to get rid of the Conservative government in the foreseeable future to vote for Roy Hattersley. It is most likely, however, that in the autumn we will be discussing margins of victory for the incumbents, and judging whether they are to be regarded as triumphant. But there is something else which, paradoxically, we could also be considering. In the aftermath of the existing leaders' success, there may be a realisation of how vulnerable any holder of either of the party's two top posts has now become.

Such a discovery would run counter to the conventional view that the electoral college reinforces the power of the leader, and makes him or her virtually irremovable. According to this accepted theory, the complexity of the college precludes the elements of surprise necessary for an effective *coup d'état,* while the caution of the trade unions, and the reluctance of the movement collectively to take any initiative, encourages conservatism in electoral as in other matters. Already, that theory is in need of revision and it is evident that the modern leadership has to live on its nerve-ends, much more than in the past.

> *"The union section of the college have become the arbiters — and can no longer be guaranteed as a stable force in support of left or right"*

In pre-electoral-college days, though constitutionally a leader could be displaced through the clinical mechanism of a vote by the Parliamentary Labour Party, in practice a successful challenge was never made. Since that time there have been innumerable plots and several direct challenges to leaders and their deputies alike. All have failed.

SUCH A RECORD of stability at the top, against a background of three-quarters of a century of almost incessant internal strife, requires explanation. Part of the reason may lie in the siege mentality of the Parliamentary Labour Party and its sense of being a beleaguered club within a club; part in a trade union heritage of loyalty to sitting tenants; and part in the pre-1980s psychology of the Labour left which, as Jonathan Schneer shows in his excellent new study of the left during the Attlee government, was at its happiest only when operating as a small, exclusive grouping.* Successive leaders were simply able to call on the majority to close ranks against rebels towards whom there was always resentment on general grounds.

All of these factors, however, depended on the intimacy of the House of Commons family — something which the electoral college was precisely intended to counteract. Arguably, it is now showing its ability to do so, though not in ways that its architects intended. For what is becoming clear is that the union section of the college, and within it two or three large votes, have become the arbiters — and their votes can no longer be guaranteed as a stable force in support of left or right.

The constituency Labour parties, of course, escape the influence of the Westminster charmed circle. Constituency parties, however, are politically aware and, though subject to fashion, reasonably predictable. The trade union element, by contrast, is not only larger but also more volatile. If MPs and constituency parties are likely to pull in opposite directions within the electoral college, the first with an inclination to support existing leaders and to suspect the motives of their rivals, and the second with a propensity to plant a bomb under the leadership of the day, the unions provide a massive, unknowable and hence unmanageable potential counterweight to both.

THE ISSUE is not union irresponsibility but union fickleness and the block vote. The Kinnock/Hattersley camp is trying to use the second of these by urging union executives to take democracy down to the grass roots, in the belief that ordinary members are more likely to vote for friendly, middle-of-the-road faces. Nevertheless, as the recent change in complexion of the transport workers' union executive shows, a marginal shift in mood in a big union can have a massive knock-on effect. The transport workers may well decide to follow Ron Todd's lead and vote for the incumbents. But it is worth considering whether the contest would be taking place at all if the actual outcome of that particular election had not placed so large and uncertain a joker in the pack.

Fortunately for the incumbents, their own difficulties in the union section are more than matched by union feelings of downright hostility towards their challengers. But it may not always be so. A struggling leader facing a more plausible, union-admired challenger, could be in serious trouble.

A flurry of background noises about changing the rules to increase the number of MPs required to sign a challenger's nomination papers, and about the possibility of limiting the number of contests to one a parliament, reflect the newfound anxiety.

Finally, for the vanquished in the deputy struggle, there is one consolation. Nobody who has won a contest for the second post has ever become prime minister (Clement Attlee, deputy from 1931-5, was appointed, *nem con*). But three eventual leaders (Wilson, Callaghan and Foot) have been drawn from the ranks of previously defeated candidates for deputy. In the Labour Party, neither presumption nor failure has ever been a disqualification. □

* *"Labour's Conscience: The Labour Left 1945-51* Unwin Hyman £30.

An April Fool's Day gremlin got into my column last week. The second sentence should have read 'Clare Short's comment that "[the leadership contest] is a waste of everyone's time" reflected the views of all *except* the most unreformed of the hard left'. Apologies to Clare Short and puzzled readers.

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Fewer nukes don't mean a safer world

The superpowers' avowed hopes of halving their strategic nuclear weapons don't mean that they've given up hope of being able to fight a nuclear war. On the contrary, says* PAUL ROGERS, *the cuts are merely a smokescreen for updating the weapons and making them ever more accurate

AT THE end of May, Reagan and Gorbachev meet for an arms summit in Moscow. Both sides are talking about a spectacular START agreement aiming to cut long-range strategic nuclear weapons by 50 per cent. By comparison, even last year's Washington deal on intermediate range weapons would look like small beer.

Since the US has over 12,000 strategic warheads and the Soviets over 10,000, a START treaty would seem superficially to be unbelievable progress. After all, the whole of the SALT process in the 1970s was actually about setting upper limits to arsenals, not cutting them back. To get rid of 10,000 warheads would surely mean the end of the nuclear arms race.

The reality is that START is a diversion. Any agreement will concentrate primarily on getting rid of old and obsolete weapons. It will do little to control the trend towards first strike strategic weapons and will allow all the research and development into exotic nuclear weapons to continue unhindered.

There remains a powerful public misconception that strategic nuclear weapons are all about "last ditch" deterrence. Mutual assured destruction (MAD) is supposed to be the theory, with each side held back from using its own arsenals to destroy whole populations by the knowledge that their own society would, in turn, be destroyed.

This misconception has, with the acquiescence and even connivance of politicians, informed most public debate on nuclear weapons. Reagan has, grotesquely, managed to present himself as a peacemonger by attacking the concept of MAD. His Star Wars programme is, according to him, a morally acceptable alternative to the MAD orthodoxy. He emphasised this theme at a dinner given in Washington at the end of last month to mark the fifth anniversary of his Star Wars "I have a dream" speech.

If America was attacked by a single missile, he said at the dinner, "All we could do is retaliate — wipe out millions of lives on the other side — to perpetuate it forever is simply morally untenable. Vengeance is not the American way. It certainly cannot form any plausible long-term, long-standing basis for Western strategy, if a better form of deterrence can be established. Flexible response has worked, and we of course remain committed to our present strategy, but we remain equally committed to our search for a safer way to deter aggression.

"It can be said that the old discredited policy of MAD is like two adversaries holding loaded guns to each other's head. It may work for a while, but you sure better hope you don't make a slip. People who put their trust in MAD must trust it to work 100 per cent — forever. No slip ups, no madmen, no unmanageable crises, no mistakes, forever. Isn't it time we invented a cure for madness? Isn't it time to begin curing the world of this nuclear threat."

Winnable wars

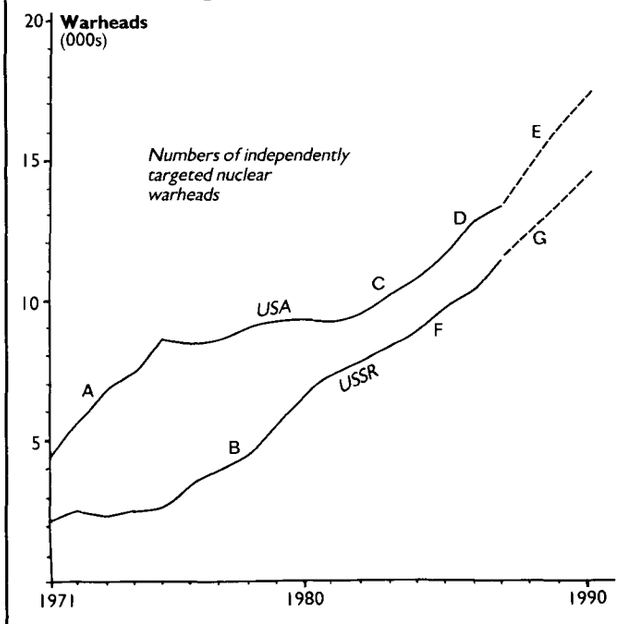
Reagan had cleverly stolen the rhetoric of the peace activists who had themselves attacked MAD. But MAD has never been the official strategy. From the beginning the strategic nuclear arms race has been about trying to find militarily useable weapons. The myth of MAD was effectively debunked by none other than General David Jones, the then Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, at Senate hearings in 1979:

> **Senator Tower:** General Jones, what is your opinion of the theory of mutual assured destruction?
> **General Jones:** I think it is a very dangerous strategy. It is not the strategy that we are implementing today with the military but it is a dangerous strategy. . .
> **Senator Tower:** Your professional military judgement is that it is a dangerous strategy and it is not one we should follow?
> **General Jones:** I do not subscribe to the idea that we ever had it as our basic strategy. I have been involved with strategic forces since the early 1950s. We have always targeted military targets. There has been a lot of discussion . . . about different strategies. We followed orders, but basically the strategy stayed the same in implementation of targeting.
> **Senator Tower:** Unfortunately, I am not sure that your opinion was shared by your civilian superiors.
> **General Jones:** I agree that there have been some, including some in government, who have felt that all we require is a mutual assured destruction capability. I am separating that from our targeting instructions in the field. . .

Ever since nuclear weapons were developed during the Second World War, the strategists have seen them as potentially useable military weapons. In 1945 they were the natural progression from strategic conventional bombing, the 1,000 bomber raids which devastated German and Japanese cities. True, the nuclear weapons of the 50s and 60s were massively powerful and would have had the most devastating side effects, but the trend throughout the last 20 years has been to work towards highly accurate nuclear weapons which can therefore destroy targets with much smaller explosive force. The typical strategic weapon of the 60s was 10 to 20 megatons. Its equivalent today is, at most, half a megaton.

As weapons have become more accurate, so they have become capable of pin-point targeting — able to destroy the opponent's missiles and bombers, in their siloes and their protected aircraft shelters. At

The strategic arms race



Key

A: US introduces multiple independently-targeted re-entry vehicles (MIRVs) on its intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (ICBMs and SLBMs)

B: USSR follows with MIRVs on its ICBMs

C: US deploys air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) and MIRVed Trident C4 SLBMs

D: US introduces MX "Peacekeeper" ICBMs

E: US introduces new Trident D5 SLBM with 14 warheads per missile

F: USSR embarks on major programme of MIRVing its SLBMs

G: USSR introduces ALCMs on new bomber

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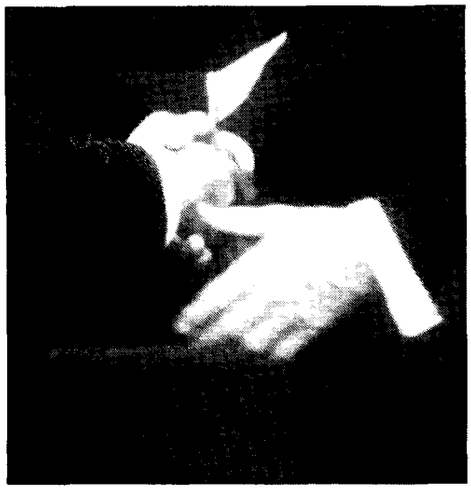
Let's shake on it pal: out with the old and in with the new

All photos: Rex Features



the same time, highly aggressive strategies are being developed to deal with missile submarines (see Jeremy Leggett's *NS* article, 6 November, 1987). As a result, we are moving rapidly into an era of first strike weapons. Each side is striving to develop these "counterforce" weapons, but as they do so they increase the risk of a "use them or lose them" attitude in time of crisis.

Nuclear winter

For a while, such tactics seemed to have been made militarily and politically untenable by the nuclear winter theory, first developed five years ago. This suggested that even small nuclear strikes could have devastating consequences because the fires started by the explosions would produce smoke and dust which would almost entirely screen out heat and light from the sun and plunge the earth into permanent winter. But later work indicates that this argument can be turned on its head. A nuclear winter could indeed result from small strikes on *cities* — but not from strikes on silos, which would not generally cause fires. The military have, at least privately, used the nuclear winter theory to bolster their arguments.

As the first strike weapons have been developed, so new ways are being sought to counter them. One option is missile defences. Another is mobile inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Already, though, exotic counter-technologies are being developed to meet these new challenges. Missile defences will be evaded by nuclear warheads contained within manoeuvrable re-entry vehicles (MaRVs) which can dodge around in space and can even be retargeted to destroy mobile ICBMs. The B2 "stealth" bomber, due to fly later this year, is also aimed partly at mobile ICBMs,

"START is a diversion. Any agreement will concentrate primarily on getting rid of old and obsolete weapons, doing little to control the trend towards first strike strategic weapons, allowing research into exotic nuclear weapons to continue unhindered"

able to roam through Soviet air space undetected by radar while it seeks out and destroys mobile targets.

To be even more certain of destroying silo-based ICBMs, as well as heavily protected command bunkers, the Lawrence Livermore weapons laboratory in California is currently working on an "earthquake bomb" in which an earth-penetrating missile with an H-bomb warhead plunges deep underground before exploding with an earthquake effect which destroys the most heavily protected target. As a final twist of sophistication the Pentagon now has a programme to marry the earth penetrating warhead to the manoeuvrable re-entry vehicle to product the "EPMaRV".

Beyond these new technologies lie the third generation nuclear weapons in which the explosive force of detonation can be channelled in one direction, giving an awesome concentration of destructiveness, and resulting in routinely useable nuclear weapons.

None of these developments will be controlled by any START agreement. Indeed a recent key-note article in the *US Air Force Magazine* (February 1988) reports:

> American strategic nuclear deterrent, though a prime target for Geneva arms negotiators, appears headed towards a strengthening. Such is the prospect, even should President Reagan succeed in his campaign to achieve epic cuts in superpower nuclear arsenals at the START talks in Geneva.
>
> The force, even if cut fifty per cent as Reagan hopes, would have a larger proportion of newer arms because older weapons are being replaced with modern ones — ICBMs, submarine-launched missiles, bombers and cruise missiles. It's not just a matter of newer arms. The planned US strategic weaponry of the future would possess properties that would provide major gains in effectiveness relative to predecessor arms.

Thus START is no problem for the military. Indeed it will have the twin advantages of allowing all the new programmes to continue while reassuring public opinion.

What is really needed is a START agreement which is accompanied by a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty *and* a freeze on deployment of new strategic nuclear weapons. Such a combination really would lead to a lower level of nuclear risk. We are not going to get this. The best that can be hoped for is that START goes ahead, with the next focus of campaigning being immediate negotiations on a test ban and a strategic freeze in strategic weapon deployments. Anti-nuclear campaigners, and not just in the US, must make this a priority later this year. □

Additional reporting by Dan Plesch

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Learning from the new breed in management

British managers have changed their image. Lean and competitive like the post-recession companies they run,* DAVID THOMAS *argues they have nothing to learn from Labour's industrial strategy . . . but perhaps Labour could learn from them

AS THE ORDERLY ranks of portly middle-aged men tucked into their quails' eggs and salmon at the Institute of Directors' annual conference recently, casual observers could have been forgiven for thinking that nothing much has happened to disturb the world of the top British manager. They would have been wrong.

In the decade since Labour last enjoyed power, British management has undergone a profound transformation. Yet many of the tremors which have shaken the higher reaches of British companies seem to have passed Labour by, rendering much of the rhetoric underlying Labour's policies for industry hopelessly out-of-date.

Management — running things effectively — has long been one of Labour's weak suits. Many activists, wedded to workerism, regard anyone expressing an interest in efficiency as supping with the devil.

So it is hardly surprising that many organisations associated with the Labour movement were known in the past for their internal chaos. The Labour Party itself, many trade unions, workers' co-ops and left-leaning pressure groups, not to mention a sprinkling of Labour-controlled local councils, have all fallen prey to the disease.

Amateurish recruitment procedures, where ability to parrot a line is the key qualification; senior management's inability to motivate their staff; the absence of sanctions if employees including top management fail to deliver; lack of systematic goal setting or checking whether goals are being met — these are just some of the failings which have marked out radical organisations.

In the past few years, there have been welcome signs that a new breed of managers, committed above all to the need to deliver, have moved into the top ranks of some of these organisations, including some Labour local councils. Yet Labour's management-blindness remains one of the main props to the fantasies underlying swathes of Labour's policies for private industry.

Except perhaps during Wilson's enthusiasm for white hot technology, Labour has never fashioned an approach or even a language attractive to most managers. As a result, only a handful of senior managers, endlessly recycled at party events, have any time for Labour's industrial policies.

This ignorance has allowed Labour to construct a stereotype of top British managers as badly educated amateurs excited only by their perks. Labour's demands for more say in industrial decisions for unions and government has in turn been sustained by this belief that boardrooms are stuffed with Colonel Blimps.

The stereotype of the British manager may have had some substance in the past. But the storms which have swept companies in the 1980s have ushered in a management revolution. Many of the old guard have been replaced by better trained professionals in their thirties and forties. Their attitudes do not fit into the well-worn categories shaped by Labour's prejudices.

Take just one example. Last year, Peter Gershon, then aged 41, moved from the ICL computer company to run STC's telecommunications subsidiary, a business with annual sales running into hundreds of millions.

Gershon, used to the informal ways of the computer industry, found a management which he describes as bureaucratic, inward-looking and status-obsessed. Everyone called him "Mr", which he stopped at once. He abolished the management dining room and removed the Jags from the top managers, who were given tough new performance targets. Many could not match the pace. Half were replaced by managers in their forties.

Full marks, one might say, for tackling the sort of inefficiencies which have bedevilled British industry. But Gershon did not stop with the managers. He introduced individually assessed merit pay for all the company's workers, including the shop floor, and followed it up with systematic briefing of the workers which bypassed the old union structures.

Workforce trends

Labour has begun the task of sorting out the wheat from the chaff in the arena of industrial relations. The trends shaping the workforce in the 1980s are now well understood — the growth in part-time work, usually done by women, the devolving of bargaining away from company head offices to businesses and plants, the attempt by companies to communicate with workers over the heads of their unions, and so on.

Many union officials recognise that these trends are not wholly bad. Tim Webb, a national officer dealing with high tech companies for the white collar union MSF (recently created by a merger of ASTMS and TASS), describes the personnel professionals of the 1980s as better educated than their predecessors. They are in his view committed to ushering in some egalitarian reforms, such as common facilities for managers and workers, though he adds that most have never been tested in a period when bargaining power lies with the unions.

Labour's policy makers have started to pick out the good from the bad in these trends — welcoming the greater flexibility offered through more part-time work, but demanding more employment rights for part-time workers, for instance.

Yet Labour has barely woken up to the changes transforming other facets of company behaviour. Thus, Bryan Gould, Labour's shadow Industry Secretary, last month offered a new partnership to industry in the first speech in a six-part series adding up to a new "Gould plan" for industry.

Industry needed closer collaboration with government because, Gould said, nothing has changed. Many of the old problems remain. The plant closures and redundancies which marred the early 1980s were a sacrifice made for virtually nothing at all.

That is not how the new breed of senior managers like Peter Gershon see it. Nor, whatever the economy-wide statistics say, does it accord with the reality on the ground in British industry. Far from nothing having changed, the history of British industry under Thatcher has fallen into three distinct phases.

- The early 1980s was the era of cutbacks as companies desperately tried to modernise in the face of an over-valued pound and high interest rates. Much of the rhetoric of Labour's statements on industry seem stuck in this phase.
- The mid-1980s brought the beginnings of stability as the companies which had survived the early 1980s whirlwind began to pick up the pieces.
- The late 1980s saw a return of confidence as British companies, buoyed up by booming profits and rising productivity began to lay down plans for international expansion of a boldness not seen for a generation.

We are still in the middle of this third phase, which has been marked by aggressive overseas acquisitions by British companies, particularly in the United States, and by long overdue restructuring of the major companies in certain key sectors, such as semi-conductors, telecommunications equipment and textiles.

Many of Britain's largest companies are now being run by managers determined to re-build British industry as an international force. The message has finally sunk home that British industry cannot hope to survive if its effort is mainly directed at Britain, which represents about 5 per cent of the world market.

Many of these attempts to break into world markets may end in tears. Yet Labour would do well to recognise and welcome the emergence of large swathes of British industry from its shell and the professionalism which underlies it.

Filling a gap

There is a place for a powerful Labour industrial policy quite distinct from that of the Conservatives. Labour could promise to emulate governments like the French which have made sure that their companies are at the forefront of the international restructuring now under way in many sectors. The free market is still failing to provide resources on a national scale for activities like training and research: this is a gap which the public sector could do more to fill.

But Labour's lingering desire for a policy of detailed intervention in the strategic plans of individual industrial sectors looks more suspect in the light of the management revolution. The Labour Party, which effectively means a handful of politicians and researchers with almost no experience in industrial management to rub between them, needs to rethink the implications of its age-old belief that it can second-guess the decisions made by managers in motors, semi-conductors, telecommunications, textiles, chemicals, engineering, construction. . . □

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STATE OF THE NATION

John Rentoul

A ballot paper made for two

IN 1990 women will cease to be their husbands' property for tax purposes. Of course this is less of a leap forward for women's rights than Nigel Lawson (a well-known feminist who gave his daughters boys' names) claimed in his budget last month. He did only the absolute minimum needed to cut out the formal and overt sexism of the tax system.

The main beneficiaries will be — once again — the rich. I ought to be careful about saying that sort of thing. Look what happened to Bishop Jenkins when he called it "a rich man's budget" last weekend. The *Sunday Telegraph* published an article under the headline "Why none dare call it treason". It wasn't actually about Bishop Jenkins, but you get the general idea. What Bishop Jenkins should have called it, of course, was "a rich woman's budget".

The people who will gain most in 1990 will be married couples with a lot of income from investments. At the moment, the Inland Revenue regards a couple's unearned income as joint, adds it onto the *man*'s earnings and taxes it at 40 per cent if that takes him over £20,000. In 1990, a wife will be able to say some of the investments are hers and, if she has low or no earnings, have the income from them taxed at the 25 per cent standard rate up to her £20,000 limit.

The chancellor's act was, therefore, more one of class liberation than women's liberation. As such, it raises awkward questions about the connections between class and sex. Should we praise Lawson for having released rich women from the prison of their husband's tax return, or condemn him for redistributing income from poor women and men to rich women and men? The budget eloquently demonstrated that the obvious "correct" line, to treat individuals equally regardless of their sex, ignores the fact that most real people live in couples. People's living standards are not just determined by how much they earn as individuals, but by how much their partner earns and how many children they have. The Inland Revenue's practice of taxing a rich couple as a rich couple, instead of two separate individuals who are half as rich, is a crude way of being fair between households, rather than between individuals.

More to the point is the Inland Revenue's assumption that the family revolves around the man, and that all its income is his income. However, a new book reveals how much the Inland Revenue's sexism reflects the social reality of Britain even in the 1980s. *Social Class in Modern Britain*, by Marshall, Newby, Rose and Vogler (Hutchinson £25) is bound to become the standard work on class. One of its most interesting sections is its contribution to the debate about sex and class.

The debate turns on the question of whether social classes are most usefully thought of as being made up of individuals or families. The "conventional" view, which *Social Class* blames on "mainstream American theorists", is that families and everyone in them should be allocated to classes according to the job of the *male* head of household. This is on the plausible grounds that men have the power within families to decide such things. The "unconventional" view, put forward by Michelle Stanworth, is that men may have the upper hand in society, but they don't dominate everything: women who have jobs, therefore, have their own class identity. (Everybody, it appears, accepts that the starting point in determining social class is occupation: no one talks about the ownership of the means of production any more.)

THIS ISN'T just an academic quibble. How social class is defined is central to our understanding of society, and especially of politics. A woman recently wrote to the *Guardian* saying she wasn't going to co-operate with opinion pollsters if they persisted in asking about the "head of household" and insisting it had to be a man. Most sociology and all market research and opinion polling classifies people as A, B, C1 and so on according to the job of the head of their household. The British Market Research Bureau spells it out: "If this person is a married woman, whose husband is a member of the household, then he is regarded as the head of household."

> *When women have a job of a different class from their husband's, they may vote according to what they think are the interests of the family as a whole, but many of their political values are what we would expect of people doing their kind of job*

This may seem, and indeed is, highly offensive to a married woman who is being interviewed, but *Social Class* reveals that it is not a wholly illogical way of classifying people. Its novel discovery is this: married women, even if they are in paid work, tend to vote in line with what their husband's occupation would suggest, not their own. And they tend to describe themselves as middle or working class according to their husband's job and not what they do. This is important because 50 per cent of two-earner couples have different-class jobs. In those cases, it is usually the woman who adjusts her class to match her husband. Class and marriage go together like a horse and carriage, it seems.

By reporting these findings, the authors of *Social Class* seem to support the "conventional" side of the debate. But no. They claim instead that both sides are right. Married women don't adjust their class in deference to their husband's patriarchal authority, they suggest, they adjust to their *household*'s class. But, because men tend to have, and have for longer, higher-paid jobs, the class of a household *is* most likely to be influenced by the man's job. There are very few households in which the woman holds the better-paid and higher-status full-time job — and in only 1 per cent of households with children does the mother work full-time and the father work part-time or stay at home. But the book suggests that market researchers and pollsters have no excuse for not getting rid of the sexist bias in their questions. At the very least, they could simply ask: "Who is the main earner in your household?" instead of assuming it has to be a man.

What's more, the authors of *Social Class* have also discovered that married women do hold onto some of the class culture of their own jobs. When women have a job of a different class from their husband's, they may *vote* according to what they think are the interests of the family as a whole, but many of their *political values* are what we would expect of people doing their kind of job, and are not affected by their husband's job. In particular, their attitudes to social inequality are influenced by their own experience in the job market.

So the "conventional" view of sex and class takes a too gloomy view of the potential for women to assert their political values against men in full-time, long-term careers, who usually have the greater influence over a family's class and politics. How great that potential might be is suggested if we re-draw the class map of Britain by categorising working married women separately according to their own jobs. It would transform the social structure. Social class III ("routine non-manual" or clerical workers) more than trebles in size from 6 per cent of the population to 20 per cent. The beleaguered manual working class shrinks further from 40 per cent to 36 per cent.

ALL OF WHICH comes at just the time when market researchers and opinion pollsters are already worried about how to define social class. Consternation broke out among television advertisers last year when the Broadcasters' Audience Research Board reported that one-third of its audience panel apparently changed social class over a twelve-month period. Nor were their minds put at rest when an investigation discovered that only 4-7 per cent of the panel had really changed class, and that the rest of the changes were because of "misclassification".

They should not have been surprised. A report at last month's Market Research Society said that, when a sample of people were re-interviewed after ten months, *41 per cent* appeared to have changed social class. The problem is that allocating people to classes according to their jobs is an arbitrary business, and interviewers doing it on the doorstep obtain different job descriptions and make variable decisions.

But next week political scientists Anthony Heath and Sharon Witherspoon publish a paper reporting their experiment with a new system which gets people being interviewed to allocate *themselves* to a social class. Trials carried out by National Opinion Polls show that this system is much more consistent and much more accurate (in that it is a better predictor of how people vote) than the existing ABC system.

The new system also makes it easier to allocate working women to classes based on their own jobs. Let's hope the opinion pollsters take it up.

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How to clear the deficit

While Labour may be enjoying the government's uneasy excuses for the worsening trade balance, the prospects of inheriting a crisis should it win power in 1991 is casting a shadow over its hopes of introducing radical policies. *Economists* **KAREL WILLIAMS, JOHN WILLIAMS** *and* **COLIN HASLAM** *attempt to clear the gloom. They argue that at a stroke a Labour government could solve the balance of payments problem without scaring off the City*

Credit: Jacques Lowe

How can Labour control the City's international market?

THE BALANCE of payments is deteriorating at an alarming rate. In the first two months of 1988, the deficit was over £1.5 billion, which is almost as large as that for the whole of the previous year. At present the government makes half-hearted excuses about ferry strikes and changes in Customs documentation. If the run of bad figures continues, no doubt the government will adjust them and find an extra billion in unrecorded invisible earnings. Whatever happens, the official budget estimate of a £4 billion current account deficit in 1988 is much too low. The unofficial forecasts which put the deficit at anything between £5.3 and £8 billion are more plausible.

Part of the problem is "overheating" in the latter stages of a consumption boom. Real national income grew by over 4 per cent in 1987 and more growth will be stimulated by Nigel Lawson's giveaway budget. But damping down consumer demand would not solve our underlying structural problem about trade in manufactured goods. The CBI's March trends survey suggested that manufactured imports would grow more than twice as fast as exports in 1988. That disparity in growth rates is in line with long term trends. Since 1975 manufactured import values have grown more than three times as fast as export values.

It is nearly certain that the current account deficit will increase in the years after 1988. Mrs Thatcher may have changed many things but she has not transformed the competitiveness of British manufacturing. Since the balance of trade in manufactures first went into the red in 1983, the deficit has increased at a rate of around £2 billion a year. The cushion of earnings from financial services may increase but they cannot compensate for further steady widening in the gap between imports and exports.

This is a problem for the Tories who will try to cover the current account deficit on merchandise trade and services by borrowing money. This serves to offset the trade deficit. A government which is ideologically opposed to public borrowing must rely on private borrowing and hope that high interest rates will attract funds into London markets. This kind of policy could work for a year or two as long as the amount borrowed is relatively small in relation to national income — and £8 billion is only less than 2 per cent of national income. But, as the borrowings build up, there will be talk about fundamental disequilibrium and the need to reduce the balance of payments deficit by deflation, which increases the number of unemployed who cannot afford imported manufactures. In the second half of their third term, the Tories will resist deflation because their political instinct for self-preservation is much stronger than their economic commitment to sound finance.

Labour's crisis

The worsening trade position is an even greater potential problem for Labour. If Labour wins in 1991, the incoming Labour administration will inherit a payments deficit which will quickly become a crisis. The option of borrowing will not be open to a Labour government which does not have the confidence of the international financial community. Whatever comes out of the policy reviews and goes into the next manifesto, Labour will want reflation to create properly paid jobs and to invest socially in decent homes, schools and hospitals. These policies must increase the current account deficit and deliver a Labour administration into the hands of international financial institutions, which will offer loans only on the condition that Labour adopts "responsible" deflationary policies.

A fall in the exchange rate will not save Labour from this fate worse than debt. The exchange rate will fall before Mr Kinnock's Jaguar takes him to Buckingham Palace. Foreign exchange dealers who anticipate a Labour victory will take forward positions which drive down the spot rate. Depreciation will improve the competitiveness of the British manufactures who are still in business, but it will not rebuild demolished factories and disbanded distribution networks. And, as depreciation makes imports more expensive, it will squeeze profits and real wages.

So how should Labour plan to shift the balance of payments constraint on radical economic policies? Many of the economic changes of the past decade have made it more difficult to manage a national economy and carry through a socialist experiment. In finance these changes include de-regulation of financial markets, removal of exchange controls and a dramatic increase in the volume of international capital flows. But these changes are an opportunity as well as a problem, because new patterns of capital movement create

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opportunities for intervention which could be exploited by Labour.

In the 1980s, our financial institutions have bought increasing quantities of foreign stocks and shares — that means Britain has become a large exporter of capital. This flow of new investment was augmented by capital gains in the long rising stock market, so the institutions have built up a large stock of foreign assets. The table (see box) summarises the available statistics on the annual flows of new investment out of Britain and on the accumulated stock of foreign assets owned in this country.

Against this background, Labour should look again at the case for exchange contracts. The kind of controls which Mrs Thatcher abolished in 1979 are irrelevant to the problems of 1991. Old style controls policed all transactions with the aim of keeping the value of the pound high. Such controls are impractical in a world of electronic funds transfer and currency risk hedging. They are also irrelevant because their objective of a high pound puts up the price of exports and causes the economy to contract. That needs to be said because politicians, like generals, tend to fight the last war. In the next campaign, Labour has the opportunity to propose new kinds of control on capital which could be used to make the balance of payments balance.

Panic-proof solution

If the current account deficit cannot be covered by *borrowing* capital from foreign financial institutions, why not prohibit portfolio capital *lending* by British financial institutions? In 1986 that would have blocked an outflow of more than £20 billion and improved the payments to that extent. We cannot be sure that this would do the trick because new investment flows are volatile. Preliminary figures for 1987 suggest a much reduced capital outflow. If that trend is maintained, a Labour government could still make the balance of payments balance by enforcing repatriation of some or all of the stock of overseas holdings. That big pot of money held £150 billion in 1986 and holds a similar sum today, despite the stock market crash last autumn.

These kinds of controls represent a minimal intervention which is administratively practical and panic proof. The institutional freedom to invest in different kinds of assets would not be greatly reduced. Most pension funds and insurance companies hold 15 per cent or less of their investments in foreign securities. Official statistics show the income earned on these holdings is around 4 per cent. When capital gains on foreign shares are unlikely in the short run, many fund managers would not struggle unduly if they were forced to swap foreign shares for 10 per cent gilts. The dealings of unco-operative fund managers could be effectively policed by a regular audit of institutional investment portfolios. Defiant institutions could be threatened with a loss of their tax privileges.

At this point, those who have followed Labour Party economic policy debates in recent years will realise that we have been here before — albeit for a different purpose. Before the last election, Roy Hattersley proposed the repatriation of foreign capital holdings as a way of financing a National Investment Bank. The opportunity now is to use limits on overseas lending and possibly some repatriation of existing foreign assets for a more central and strategic economic purpose. Unless Labour is prepared to contemplate this kind of financial policy, any grand design for building a just society and a more productive economy will be undermined by external pressures.

Every Labour government since 1929 has faced some kind of external constraint. The history of humiliation runs from the 1931 "banker's ramp" to the 1976 International Monetary Fund loan. 1991 can be different, but only if we plan to make it so. □

The outflow of capital

	New investment £ million	Asset stock £ million
1979	909	12,300
1980	3,230	18,600
1981	4,300	25,300
1982	6,790	40,200
1983	6,510	59,600
1984	9,550	87,000
1985	17,530	100,700
1986	22,870	145,700

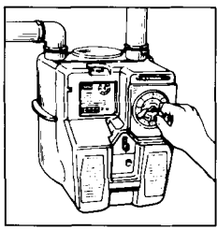
Source: Pink Book

The authors develop the argument in "Labour's Economic Policy Options", available from the Economics Department, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where Karel Williams and John Williams teach. Colin Haslam is at Middlesex Polytechnic.

Reselling Gas to Tenants New Maximum Resale Price of Gas

Many landlords provide tenants with gas through a meter that is owned and read by the landlord.

Where the landlord's gas is provided by British Gas plc, there is a Maximum Resale Price (MRP) for the gas resold by the landlord. From 1 April 1988 the MRP, which is fixed by the office of Gas Supply - the gas industry watchdog body - will be 38.5p per therm. Additionally the landlord is allowed to impose a daily availability charge which enables him to recover the standing charge he pays to British Gas. This charge, which should be divided equally between the number of secondary meters supplied, is 8.9p per day, except in the following regions: Scottish, Wales, Eastern, North Thames, South Eastern, Southern and South Western, where it is 9.6p per day.



The MRP is set so that tenants pay no more for their gas than they would if they were direct customers of British Gas, and so that landlords make no profit from selling gas to tenants.

For further information, including advice on prepayment meter settings, on MRP for manufactured gas, and on the resale of gas in commercial/industrial premises, contact OFGAS at Southside, 105 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QT. Tel. 01-828 0898 or 01-828 4110.

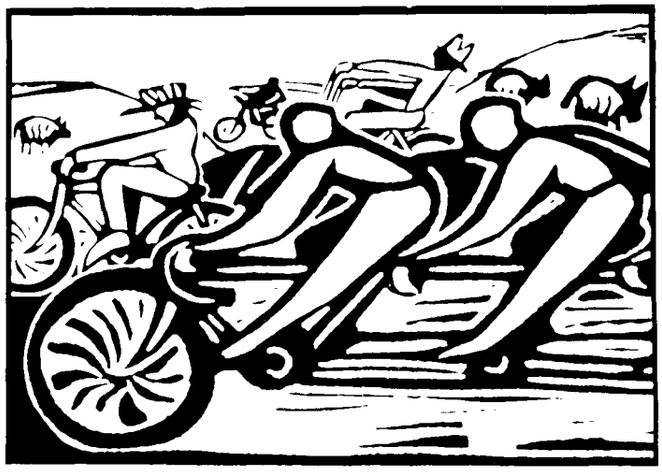
Leaflets giving full details will be available soon from your local British Gas showroom, or from your nearest Gas Consumers Council office.

ofgas
Southside
105 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QT.

Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign

CITY LIMITS MAGAZINE

LONDON TO OXFORD SPONSORED BIKE RIDE FOR NICARAGUA



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ESSAY

The blue tiger and the promised land

The Conquistadores wanted the gold; the multinationals want the uranium, the nickel, the manganese, the tungsten. . . But greed alone cannot explain the implacable violence of Latin America's invaders. "They are killing us because we work together, we eat together, we live together, we dream together," say the Maya indians. Uruguayan novelist* EDUARDO GALEANO *looks forward to the 500th anniversary of the "discovery" of America, and back over half a millennium of genocide

FINE WORDS and pretty ceremonies are about to descend on us in floods; the 500th anniversary of the so-called Discovery is imminent. I think Alejo Carpentier was quite right when he called this the greatest event in the history of humankind. But it seems strikingly clear to me that America wasn't discovered in 1492, just as the Roman legions didn't discover Spain when they invaded it in 218 BC. *And it also seems to me clear as can be that it's high time America discovered itself.* And when I say America, I'm talking first and foremost about the America that's been despoiled of everything, even its name, in the five-centuries-long process that put it at the service of foreign progress: our Latin America.

This necessary discovery, a revelation of the face hidden behind so many masks, rests on the redemption of some of our most ancient traditions. It's out of hope, not nostalgia that we must revindicate a way of life and productive activity based on community, founded not on greed, but solidarity, age-old freedoms and a close identification between man and nature. I believe there's no better way to honour the indians, the first Americas, who have kept alive their identity and their message through successive campaigns of extermination from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego. Today they still hold out vital keys to memory and prophecy: simultaneously they bear witness to the past and cast the light of fresh fires on the road ahead. If the values they embody had no more than archaeological worth, the indians wouldn't go on being the target of bloody repression, nor would the powerful be so keen to separate them from class struggles and from popular liberation movements.

I am not a believer in traditions for their own sake: I believe in the legacies that multiply human freedom, and not in those that confine it. It seems obvious, but it can never be too obvious: when I talk about the remote voices from the past that can help us find replies to the challenge of the present, I'm not advocating those rites of sacrifice that offered up human hearts to the gods, nor am I praising the tyranny of the Inca or Aztec rulers.

On the contrary, I'm celebrating the fact that America can discover its youngest energies through its most ancient sources: the past says things that interest the future. A system that is lethal to the world and its inhabitants, contaminating water, polluting earth and poisoning both the air and the soul, is violently in contradiction with cultures that hold the earth to be sacred because we, its children, are sacred; those cultures, despised and dismissed, treat the earth as a mother and not as a production site and source of income. Against the capitalist law of profit they set the sharing of life, reciprocity and mutual aid that in the past were the inspiration for Thomas Moore's Utopia, and which today help us to discover the American image of socialism, whose deepest roots lie in the tradition of community.

Halfway through the last century, an indian chief called Seattle told officials of the United States government: "After a few days, a dying man no longer smells the odour of his own body. Go on polluting your bed, and one night you will die suffocated by your own foulness." Chief Seattle also said: "What befalls the earth, befalls the children of the earth." I've just been listening to these same words, exactly the same, from the lips of one of the Maya-Quiché indians, in a documentary film recently shot in the Ixcán mountains of Guatemala. This is how the Maya indians, hunted down by the army, account for the persecution their people are suffering: "They are killing us because we work together, we eat together, we live together, we dream together."

An indian woman waits for Pope John Paul II at Campo de Marte army field, Guatemala City

> *"If the values they embody had no more than archaeological worth, the indians wouldn't go on being the target of bloody repression. . ."*

What dark threat is kindled bright by the indians of the Americas, what threat stubborn with life despite the centuries of crime and contempt? What are the ghosts exorcised by the executioners? What panics?

To justify the seizure of the Sioux indian territories, at the end of the last century, the US Congress declared that "community property is a danger to the development of the free enterprise system". And in March 1979 in Chile a law was introduced compelling the Mapuche indians to divide their land into plots and turn themselves into smallholders with no ties of mutual association; then the dictator Pinochet explained that communities are incompatible with the nation's economic progress. The North American Congress was quite right. So was General Pinochet. From capitalism's point of view, communal cultures, that neither divorce man from other men nor from nature, are enemy cultures.

The official history of the conquest of America has been narrated from the perspective of mercantile capitalism in expansion. That perspective has Europe as its centre and Christianity as its single truth. This is essentially the same official history that describes the "reconquest" of Spain by the christians from the "moorish" invaders, a means of excluding Spaniards of Muslim culture who had lived in the peninsula for seven centuries by the time they were expelled. The expulsion of these supposed "moors", who had nothing moorish about them, along with Spaniards of Jewish faith, signalled the triumph of intolerance and latifundism and sealed the ruinous history of that very Spain that discovered and conquered America. A few years before friar Diego de Landa cast the books of the Mayas into the flames in Yucatán, Archbishop Cisneros had burned the Islamic books in Granada, in a great bonfire of purification that blazed for several days.

In spite of that, official history discloses a self-contradictory reality. That reality, burned, banned and falsified, nonetheless emerges through the shock and the horror, the disgust and also the admiration of the chroniclers of the Indies when

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Former US military attaché, Colonel George Maynes, observing civil patrol — i.e. stage-managed, pro-government — rally in Nebaj, Quiché province, Guatemala. Both photos from *Guatemala: Eternal Spring, Eternal Tyranny*, photos and text by Jean-Marie Simon (Norton, £18.95 & £10.95)

first confronted with those beings that Europe, the Europe of the Inquisition, was in the process of "discovering".

In 1537 the Church acknowledged that the indians were human beings, endowed with souls and the faculty of reason, but it gave its blessings to infamy and dispossession. It came down to the fact that the indians were human beings, but human beings possessed by the devil, and so without any rights. The *conquistadores* were acting in the name of God, to root out idolatry, and the indians gave constant proof of irremediable perdition and irrefutable reasons for condemnation.

The indians had no knowledge of private property. They didn't use gold or silver as currency, but to decorate their bodies or pay homage to their gods. Those false gods were on the side of sin. The indians went naked: the sight of nakedness, said archbishop Pedro Cortés Larraz, induced "much injury to the brain". There were no indissoluble marriage bonds in any part of America, and virginity had no worth. On the coasts of the Caribbean and other regions, homosexuality was unrestrained, though it offended God as much or even more than the cannibalism of the Amazon forests. The indians had the unwholesome habit of bathing every day and, to cap it all, they believed in dreams. Thus the Jesuits were able to confirm the influence of Satan on the Canadian indians: indians so diabolical that they had interpreters to translate the symbolic language of dreams, because they believed that the soul speaks while the body sleeps and that dreams express unfulfilled desires. The Iroquois, the Guaraní and other indians of the Americas elected their chiefs at open meetings — where women took part as men's equals — and removed their power if they became overbearing. Doubtless possessed by the devil, Chief Nicaragua asked who had elected the king of Spain.

Infernal lusts

"Good fish gets boring in the long run, but sex is always entertaining," said, and say, the Mehinaku indians of Brazil. Sexual freedom carried an unbearable whiff of sulphur. The chronicles of the Indies abound in the scandal of these infernal lusts that lurked in more or less any corner of America outside the valleys of Mexico and Cuzco, which were havens of puritanism. Official history reduces pre-Columbian reality largely to the centres of the two most highly organised cultures in terms of social and material development. Incas and Aztecs were at the height of imperial expansion when they were overthrown by the European invaders, who formed alliances with their subject peoples. In those societies, vertically dominated by kings, priests and warriors, rigid codes of behaviour held sway, their taboos and prohibitions leaving little or no room for freedom. But even in those centres, the most repressive in America, what came later was worse. The Aztecs, for example, punished adultery with death, but they allowed divorce at the wish of the man or woman. Another example: the Aztecs had slaves, but the children of the slaves were not born slaves. Marriage for life and hereditary slavery were European products that America imported in the sixteenth century.

In our time, the conquest continues. The indians go on expiating their sins of community, freedom and other affronts. The purifying mission of Civilisation no longer masks the plunder of gold, or of silver: under the banners of Progress advance the legions of modern pirates, with neither hooked hands, patched eyes nor wooden legs, multinational companies that swoop down on uranium, nickel, manganese and tungsten. The indians suffer, as before, the curse of the wealth of the lands they inhabit. They had been driven towards arid soil; technology has found, beneath it, fertile subsoils.

"The conquest isn't over," gaily proclaimed notices published in Europe seven years ago, offering Bolivia to foreigners. The military dictatorship held out to the highest bidder the richest land in the country, while they treated the Bolivian indians the same as in the sixteenth century. In the first phase of the conquest, indians were compelled to describe themselves thus in public documents: "I, wretched indian . . ." Now, the indians only have the right to exist as servile wage-hands or tourist attractions.

"Land isn't for selling. The land is our mother. You don't sell your mother. Why don't they offer the Pope $100 million for the Vatican?" a Sioux chief said recently in the United States. A century earlier, the Seventh Cavalry had flattened the Black Hills, the Sioux's sacred territory, because they held gold. Now, the multinational corporations are exploiting uranium, even though the Sioux refuse to sell. The uranium is poisoning the rivers.

A few years ago, the Colombian government told the indian communities of the Cauca valley, "The subsoil isn't yours. The subsoil belongs to the Colombian nation", and then immediately handed it over to the Celanese Corporation. After a time the Cauca turned into a lunar landscape. Some

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2,500 acres of indian land were made barren.

In the Equatorial Amazon, oil is turning the Auca indians off their land. A helicopter flies over the forest, with a loudspeaker announcing in the Auca language: "It's time to leave now. . ." And the indians observe the will of God.

In 1979 a warning came from the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva: "Unless the Brazilian government alters its plans, we can expect the largest of the surviving tribes to be extinct within 20 years." The Commission was referring to the Yanomanis, in whose Amazonian territories tin and rare minerals had been found. For the same reason, the Nambiquara indians now number fewer than 200, and there were 15,000 of them at the start of this century. The indians are falling like flies on contact with the unknown bacteria brought by the invaders, just as in the days of Cortes and Pizarro — a process now speeded up by Dow Chemical's defoliants, sprayed from aeroplanes. When the Commission launched its pathetic warning from Geneva, FUNAL, the official body for the protection of Brazil's indians, was headed by 16 colonels and gave work to 14 anthropologists. There's been no change in the government's plans since then.

The most revealing case

In Guatemala, in the lands of the Quichés, have been found the largest oil deposits in Central America. Widespread slaughter has taken place in this decade. The army — mestizo officers and indian soldiers — has been busy bombing villages and evicting communities so that Texaco, Hispanoil, Getty Oil and other companies can survey and exploit the oil. Racism sets the terms of the plunder. Six out of ten Guatemalans are indians, but in Guatemala the word "indian" is used as an insult.

When I first arrived in Guatemala City, I sensed I was in a country foreign to itself. In the capital I encountered only one truly Guatemalan house, with fine wooden furniture, locally produced blankets and rugs, handmade earthenware and glass: only one single house not invaded by Miami-style plastic tat. It belonged to a French teacher. But you only have to travel a little way from the capital to find the green branches of the old Mayan culture, miraculously sustained despite the implacable axe-blows suffered year after year, century after century. The ruling class, ruled itself by bad taste, regard the fine indian costumes as absurd fancy-dress, only fit for carnival-time or museums; in the same way as it prefers hamburgers to *tamales* and Coca-Cola to fresh fruit juice. The official country, that lives off the real one but feels ashamed of it, would like to stamp it out. It regards the native languages as mere guttural noises, and the native religion as pure idolatry, because for the indians all land is a place of worship and every wood a sanctuary.

When the Guatemalan army passes through the Mayan villages, destroying houses, crops and animals, it reserves its best efforts for the systematic killing of children and old people. Children are killed in the same way that cornfields are scorched to their roots: "We mean to leave them with no seed," explains Colonel Horacio Maldonado Shadd. And there's always the danger that an old person might secretly be a Maya priest, transmitter of the unforgivable community tradition. The Mayas still ask forgiveness of a tree when they have to cut it down.

The repression is a cruel ceremony of exorcism. You only have to look at the photographs, the features of the officials and the sturdy size of them: these grandsons of indians, deserters of their culture, dream of being George Custer or Buffalo Bill and they long to turn Guatemala into a gigantic supermarket. And the soldiers? Don't they sometimes have the same faces as their victims, the same skin-colour, the same skin? They are indians trained for violence and humiliation. In the barracks the metamorphosis is worked: first they turn them into cockroaches, then into birds of prey. In the end they forget that all life is sacred and are convinced that horror lies in the natural order of things.

Racism isn't the sorry privilege of Guatemala. Throughout America, from north to south, the dominant culture acknowledges indians as objects of study, but denies them as subjects of history: the indians have folklore, not culture; they practise superstitions, not religions; they speak dialects, not languages; they make crafts, not art.

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Perhaps the approaching celebration of the 500th anniversary could serve to help turn things round, so topsy-turvy are they now. Not to confirm the world, adding to the self-importance, the self-glorification of the masters of power, but to denounce it and change it. To do that we'd need to celebrate the conquered, not the conquerers. The conquered and those who held common cause with them, like Bernardino de Sahagún, and those who lived for them, like Bartolomé de las Casas, Vasco de Quiroga and Antonio Vieira, and those who died for them, like Gonzalo Guerrero, who was the first conquered conquerer, ending his days fighting beside the indians, his chosen brothers, in Yucatán.

And perhaps in this way we could get a little bit closer to the day of justice that the Guaraní, pursuers of paradise, have always been waiting for. The Guaraní believe that the world wants to be different, it wants to be re-born, and so the world entreats the First Father to unleash the blue tiger that sleeps under his hammock. The Guaraní believe that someday or other that righteous tiger will shatter this world so that another world, with neither evil nor death, blame nor prohibition, will be born from its ashes. The Guaraní believe, and I do too, that life truly deserves that festival. □

Translated by Liz Heron. "Genesis" and "Faces and Masks", the first two volumes of Eduardo Galeano's trilogy "Memories of Fire", are published by Quartet.

THE NEXT PRESIDENT

Let us all eat junk

Does Jesse Jackson offer the dream of a new left-wing populism; or, as* ELLEN WILLIS *argues, is he just an ambitious conservative?

THE AMERICAN LEFT desperately needs a hero. Approaching the end of the Reagan era, we find ourselves fragmented into scores of movements, factions of movements, single issue movements, and individuals in search of a movement. It's no wonder that many leftists, casting about for some relief from our intolerable marginality and powerlessness, have seized on Jesse Jackson as the man of the hour. Unfortunately, testimonials like Barabara Ehrenreich's "Who says a black man can't be president?" have more to do with the left's myths and fantasies than with the reality of who Jesse Jackson is.

I should say first that for me the issue of whether Jackson can win is irrelevant. He has already won enough support to make the country take a black presidential candidate seriously, to wield considerable power at the Democratic convention, to gain a national platform for his views, and to influence the discourse of the campaign and the political atmosphere in general. Such accomplishments are reason enough to support a left-wing candidate, if one's aim is to challenge the systematic exclusion of leftists and their ideas from the national political arena.

My problem with Jackson is his politics: I think his progressivism amounts to the thinnest of veneers over a profound social conservatism. Until forced to accommodate the sensibilities of his leftist constituency, Jackson was anti-abortion (he still thinks it's immoral, though it shouldn't be banned) and given to homophobic remarks. On family and sexual matters he is a traditionalist; he thinks the answer to teenage pregnancy is to reassert adult authority; he inveighs against pornography and "smutty" rock lyrics, and is an enthusiastic proponent of the anti-drug hysteria that is becoming a serious threat to civil liberties in the US. And then there is the ever-touchy subject of Jackson's attitude towards Jews. Long before the "Hymietown" scandal, Jackson had a history of anti-semitic comments about Jewish power and Jewish control of the media; recently he in effect blamed American Jews for Israel's relationship with South Africa. Louis Farrakhan was not some unwelcome hanger-on to his 1984 campaign but a close associate, and part of the reason Jackson was unwilling to dissociate himself from Farrakhan was that he wanted the support of the rigidly patriarchal black Muslim community that Farrakhan represents.

Ehrenreich knows all this; she brushes it aside in a sentence, as if it were a trivial irritation. But it is no longer possible to maintain the illusion that cultural issues are separate from and less important than economic ones, and for a staunch socialist feminist like Ehrenreich to imply that it is

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strikes me as an unnerving exercise in denial.

Populist dead-end

Like many other leftists, Ehrenreich is excited about Jackson's populism. I think populism is a seductive dead end. Ehrenreich's statement that "Exactly two decades ago the right appropriated the language of populism and the politics of class. George Wallace . . . showed the way" gets it backward. American populism, though it has had its leftist moments, has historically been a reactionary movement — racist, xenophobic, anti-semitic, traditionalist, anti-intellectual, and anti-urban. By and large populist anti-corporatism has been based not on working-class consciousness but on the *ressentiment* of the rural and small-town lower middle classes who saw their social and economic status eroded by the rise of big business, big finance, and urban elites. George Wallace is actually a classic populist, the inheritor of a long southern tradition.

Nor is populist conservatism an historical accident; it is built into the glorification of "ordinary people," "the common man", "the little guy". That celebratory attitude precludes any criticism of "the people's" cultural values or acknowledgement of social conflict among them (between the sexes, say, or the generations). Its flip side is distrust and hostility toward "non-ordinary" people — those who are in some way marginal, dissident, or foreign. Combined with the assumption that all oppression comes from outside the community, this hostility leads easily to scapegoating of Jews, blacks, radicals or whomever. At the same time, populists' anti-intellectual basis inhibits them from going beyond anger at immediate oppressors (the local bank) or distant symbolic targets (Wall Street) to a systemic critique of capitalism.

For all these reasons, the demand for economic justice that is the progressive element in populism tends to dissipate as it is displaced onto social conservatism. For black people, accepting the logic of populism means identifying with the cultural values of "ordinary people" — the work ethic, the patriarchal family — as opposed to those aspects of black culture that have rejected the dominant social and sexual values. That this is indeed where Jesse Jackson stands becomes clearer and clearer as he sheds the trappings of black nationalism for a more mainstream image.

Class guilt

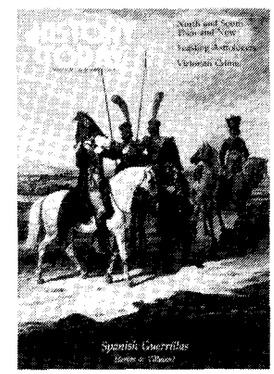
In embracing Jackson, Ehrenreich invokes neo-populist sentiments that have been a recurring theme in American left politics from the 60s to the present. Such sentiments come mainly from two sources, both solidly middle class. One is the *ressentiment* of straight male leftists whose political hegemony has been challenged by women and gays; populism provides a progressive-sounding rationale for putting down the concerns of feminists and gay liberationists as "elitist". The other is the class guilt of white, educated radicals who feel that their own politics are illegitimate unless authenticated by "ordinary people". (This attitude is often expressed in food metaphors. True "ordinary people", aka "Middle Americans", are assumed to eat junk food. Thus Ehrenreich notes with satisfaction that Jackson campaign meetings feature "coffee and frosted doughnuts . . .but no crudités or granola" — granola??? — "and not a bite of brie".) I'm not talking about the eminently sensible desire to be part of a mass movement, but about the need to have one's political identity validated by being where one imagines (often inaccurately) "the people" are — a need that has impelled all too many leftists to "adjust" their views or suspend their critical judgment.

The irony of Jackson-as-populist-hero is that he does not represent any movement. Certainly he has become a potent symbol of protest for black people, but that is not the same as being rooted in a movement with a set of substantive principles, to which one is accountable.

The fact is, Jesse Jackson is accountable to no one but himself and his ambitions. Given the flock of turkeys he is running with, there's a case that could be made for supporting him as the best of a bad lot. But it is not pragmatism that Ehrenreich is pushing. Listen to her last words: ". . .a president must also *lead*, and leading . . . is largely a matter of listening. . .being able to hear those voices that are not amplified by wealth or corporate power, and being able to translate their hopes into a vision for change, their grievances into a programme for action. . .I believe that Jesse Jackson will get his chance to do that, and that America will see an exuberant rebirth of grassroots democracy." A rebirth of grassroots democracy from the top? A populist president's leadership will transform America? Speaking of food metaphors, this is truly the equivalent of a starving person's dreams of seven-course banquets. And it doesn't get us one step closer to a square meal. □

Ellen Willis is a writer and editor for the Village Voice.

Louis XV's condoms, Victorian Values, Growing old in Ancient Greece, Early Arctic Expeditions . . .



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Let Our People Go

Israel's iron fist tightened around the occupied territories with the Land Day anniversary crackdown last week. West Bank lawyer* MONA RISHMAWI *argues that this policy will never work and spells out what the Palestinians want

Ramallah, West Bank

I WENT TO visit 24-year-old Ziyad at the hospital. He had been admitted after someone found him sitting at the gate of the military government compound here, bleeding from wounds incurred from a beating, unable to move. I looked at Ziyad; his wounded face and bandaged arms, hands and legs were telling a clear story. He showed me the blue, black, yellow and red marks that covered his body. In the past six years, I have met dozens of Palestinian victims of Israeli abuse in my work as a human rights lawyer. But the cruelty of those who had done this to Ziyad was more than I could handle.

He told me that a large unit of Israeli soldiers had come to his house, in the village of Silwad, to arrest him. Neither he nor his family was informed of the reason for the arrest. As the commander of the unit was handcuffing Ziyad, he unexpectedly and without provocation bit him on the hand. Much later, in the hospital following his arrest, Ziyad's hand had to be operated on. But that night, he was not treated for his injury. A kaffiyeh was tied around his face and he was taken from his house to a bus full of soldiers. Ziyad told me that the soldiers beat him severely. He was then taken to the military government compound in Ramallah, where he was beaten again. He spent the night, handcuffed and hooded, being beaten intermittently by various soldiers. The next morning two attempts were made to send Ziyad to prison, but the driver of the prison van refused to take him, saying the prison would not accept him in this condition.

Then someone finally had the idea that Ziyad should be seen by a doctor, who said he should be hospitalised. Instead, he was taken back to the military compound. At around eight in the evening a soldier took him to the outside gate and left him lying there. The driver of a passing car brought him to the Ramallah hospital.

As I looked at Ziyad, I saw the physical pain in his eyes. Yet, his eyes were full of strength, confidence and determination, too. Ziyad knows he is not alone, that there are hundreds of Palestinians who have been beaten by Israeli soldiers during the current uprising, from ages seven to 70. Aside from the beatings, army bullets have killed a minimum of 110 people and injured at least 1,500. Curfews have been imposed on towns, camps and villages as a form of collective punishment; often ambulances and other vehicles have not been allowed in or out of places under curfew, so the injured cannot be brought to hospital and no food can be brought in — leading in some cases to serious food shortages.

Camera Press

Yasser Arafat: calling the PLO a "terrorist organisation" does nothing to undermine its legitimacy in Palestinian eyes

It is not difficult to understand the Israeli reaction to the current uprising, but it is difficult to rationalise it. For 20 years, Israeli authorities have based their rule on false assumptions. And not only have they deluded themselves, they have also tried to convince the international community of the validity of these assumptions. From the beginning of the occupation they have divided Palestinians living under their rule into two categories: good guys and bad guys. The good guys are those who support "coexistence" between Palestinians and Israelis, which in the Israeli view means they stop being Palestinian nationalists and accept not only Israel but also its policies and actions in the occupied territories. Those, on the other hand, who do not accept this type of coexistence and support Palestinian nationalism are the bad guys; for convenience' sake, they are all labelled terrorists. The authorities have always claimed that most of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are good guys who are incited against the occupation by a small minority, which itself is instigated by the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Israel has assumed that the Palestinians in the territories would, and should, remain silent as they were driven off their land to make way for Jewish settlers — who have come from Israel and abroad to live in Greater Israel. More than 52 per cent of the total area in the West Bank (not including East Jerusalem) and 40 per cent of Gaza has come under Israeli control in the past 20 years. Currently, some 65,000 armed Jewish setttlers are living in colonies located in the midst of a Palestinian population of 1.5 million.

Iron fist

Israel has assumed that if it ruled Palestinians with an iron fist it would cow them into submission. Israel has assumed that if it successfully banned the Palestinian flag; if it banned certain books, to prevent Palestinians from reading about their own history and culture; and if it stopped them from picking and eating *za'tar* (thyme), one of their national foods, then Palestinians might simply forget their identity and culture. Israelis thought that if they called the PLO a "terrorist organisation" they would undermine its legitimacy. By preventing an authentic local leadership from emerging — through bans on elections of, for example, municipal councils and trade unions, on

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the basis that they were linked to the PLO, and through selective arrests and deportations of prominent members of the Palestinian community — they have been able to claim, disingenuously, that there is no Palestinian leadership with whom they could sit down to negotiate peace.

Wrong footed

The uprising that is now taking place has proved the emptiness of these assumptions, and the Israeli authorities have been caught on the wrong foot. Their response has been unrealistic, irrational and severe, aside from being in clear violation of international legal and moral standards.

We Palestinians living under occupation do not need to be incited by anyone to be reminded of the humiliation, of the injustice that we face every day in the Israeli military courts, of the intolerable conditions under which we have been forced to live. The uprising has demonstrated in no uncertain way that Palestinians do not accept Israeli rule in whatever form. Pamphlets distributed by what is known as the United National Leadership for the Uprising in the Occupied Territories have defined the goals of the uprising as bringing, among other things: an end to the "iron fist" policy, including deportations, administrative detentions and house demolitions; an end to the violation of holy places by the army; an end to the army's harassment of the population and the shooting of individual Palestinians; free elections and the dissolution of the Israeli-appointed municipal councils in the territories; cancellation of the value-added tax, the release of all prisoners detained during the uprising, especially given the arbitrary nature of most of the arrests; and the closure of the special detention centres in Dhahariya, al Far'a and Ansar II, where conditions are inhuman.

If Israel wants to show good faith in promoting peace efforts and thus end the uprising, the above constitutes an agenda it can start with. The essential first step is for Israel to begin dealing directly with what Palestinians consider their authentic leadership, the PLO, as a legitimate party in the conflict, irrespective of what Israel may think of it. The alternative — crushing the popular uprising by force — will fail and only strengthen Palestinian determination to rid themselves of the military occupation. Unfortunately, a display of good faith has not been part of the Israeli strategy. It therefore falls to others to pressure the Israeli authorities into taking realistic steps toward peace and justice, not only for the sake of the Palestinians but also for the sake of Israel itself.

"History has taught us that during times of oppression the oppressed unite, organise, become more sophisticated and feel their strength, the moral power derived from being victims. In such times the oppressors become more brutal and lose their sense of reason . . . they cannot win"

Time and history

I am reminded of the words of an Israeli peace activist who, speaking in June 1987 on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Israeli occupation, said to an audience of Palestinians, and here I paraphrase: It isn't you that I am worried about. You have time and history on your side. History has taught us that during times of oppression the oppressed unite, organise themselves, become more sophisticated and feel their strength, the moral power derived from being victims. Oppression pulls the society together and engenders the best in it. It is my people I am worried about. History has taught us also that in such times the oppressors lose what remains of their moral values; defensiveness makes them arrogant and blind. They become more brutal and lose their sense of reason. Their community splits and any victory that they gain during this period is temporary. History has taught us that they cannot win.

The response that we, the Palestinians, have received from the world community (except the United States) has reaffirmed our confidence in that community's sense of justice. It is only the Palestinians who can give legitimacy to the state of Israel. By refusing to negotiate with us, Israel and the United States are extending a process of suffering while at the same time jeopardising the very basis of Israel's existence. This is not because Palestinians would want to destroy Israel but because Israel, through its actions, is eroding its moral base and threatening its own existence.

We Palestinians have learned a lot from Jewish history. Through their suffering and determination, Jews were able to create a state for themselves. We, in the same way, are bound to build our own.

Postscript: Ziyad was hospitalised for 18 days. Nine days after his release, he was arrested; without being questioned, charged or tried for any offense, he was issued a three-month administrative detention order to be served in Jnaid Prison, near Nablus. □

Mona Rishmawi is an executive member of the Palestinian human rights organisation al-Haq and the West Bank affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists.

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Selling buying-power

The latest product to excite advertisers is money. As* SALLY ROWLAND *reports, it is now being packaged and sold like any can of beans — and the message is that greed's OK

THE ADVERTISING of money has come brashly out of the closet and owned up to the 80s greed factor. Cast a glance at your TV screen any night and glittering images of easy money, designer lifestyles and a Thatcherite-induced dream of wilful spending will hit you smartly between the eyes.

Eight years of Tory government has added an ideological impetus to an accelerating trend — the celebration of money. Making it, spending it and investing it has been taken to its highest art form within the 60 second commercial. If advertising mirrors social change, then the image of consumption and rampant acquisition of material dreams is here to stay. Middle-class guilt about money has been abandoned, encouraged by the slick advertising images that pervade our screens, shouting, ever so subtly, that it's okay to be mini-capitalists. The shame, if ever there was any, has been banished from the brave new world of popular capitalism.

Financial advertising represents new money. Only ten years ago an annual £39 million was spent on this sector; last year it amounted to £333 million. This year, with the onslaught of personal pension plans choking up the peak time commercial breaks, it looks set to break the £400 million barrier.

The personal savings sector includes about £80 billion in bank accounts, £125 billion in building societies and £140 billion in life assurance. It is a market well worth exploiting, and still in its infancy.

This rich gravy train of work for the advertising industry has come about through a combination of both financial legislation which has opened up the services on offer from building societies and banks, and the open-armed acceptance by consumers of a populist financial culture. It isn't simply the fine lines of the Financial Services Act which have fuelled the aggressive battle between the financial institutions, but a more subliminal change in people's attitudes to money. Cashing in on that change has been the key to the advertisers' success. As Mike Walsh, managing director of advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather, says, "Everybody asks you down the pub whether you're going in for Telecom shares and when did you sell them and there is a kind of macho thing attached to how much you did make in selling them". He points out that money is no longer a taboo subject but a reference point for the new young spender.

Taking on board that new openness, the advertising industry has gone a step further and sold us images of the product — "money" — in the same way as a lager or a box of chocolates. The common factor is that financial advertising communicates a message of "lifestyles" rather than any functional property.

For the admen it has meant a re-think of the old strategy. Just saying "The listening bank" or "The bank that likes to say yes" is simply not enough. They can't afford to adopt a patronising or hard sell approach, so instead have plumped for a seductive, glossy image of young money as disposable as a Kleenex tissue. While "yuppie" has become a debased term in the last six months, the core young market still epitomises the target for the banks and building societies' dreams.

Groundbreaker

The groundbreaker in this new world of lifestyle advertising was Midland's Vector campaign (see cover). A multi media campaign aimed directly at the yuppie solar plexus, its TV commercials embodied all the subtle nuances of the new spending society. A free £250 overdraft is yours for the privilege of £10 a month — so it offers freedom and, most importantly, a distinctive brand that the consumer can identify with, plus an array of stylish accessories which the Midland's design consultants, David Davies Associates, refer to as the "Filofax of banking".

> *Middle-class guilt about money has been abandoned — it's okay to be mini-capitalists. The shame, if ever there was any, has been banished from the brave new world of popular capitalism*

Wally Olins, chairman of the design consultancy Wolff Olins, explains the Vector appeal: "Vector has been given a brand, a name and an idea. It's as though in the old days, in one's grandparents' days, one went into a shop and bought sugar which came out of a sack. It was just called sugar. Then sugar was packed, put in white and blue cartons and it was given a name and a shape and some kind of identity."

The Midland clearly seized on this need to brand a financial service and market it in the same way as a can of beans — only more sophisticated in its appeal and creative execution. No longer a bank where the manager does the wagging finger routine, Vector skilfully turned these conceptions on their head — the arrogant young customer calls the shots. In another commercial a self-possessed young woman leaves her live-in lover courtesy of the handy £250 overdraft which offers the freedom to escape her dull relationship.

The message in both these commercials — and also to an extent in Credo ("I Believe"), Midland's service aimed at small businesses — is that in a modern world of mistrust and confrontation, both at home and work, supreme and smart one-upmanship is the only way to get ahead. Clearly that approach has curried favour. Kevin Gavaghan, marketing director of the Midland, says that over 100,000 new accounts have walked through their doors since last year. In wooing the one third of Midland customers who are overdrawn every month, he has offered them the privilege of overdrawing without guilt or shame and packaged it in the sugar-sweet coating of designer flats and smart-talking role models. "We've been very pleased with the fact that people have been using the account and therefore it's not only been good for them but very profitable from our point of view," adds Gavaghan.

Throughout the crop of financial commercials there is a clear theme of personal choice and a total preoccupation with the desires of the individual. This obsession was embraced last year by the Woolwich Building Society, which took a pivotal turn in its approach to wooing customers. From the cosy and friendly image of a savings club in the 70s to the hi-tech world of its new commercials, the Woolwich has moved from a reputation based on collectivism, "We're with the Woolwich", to a new tag line which encompasses the aspirational, "spend, spend, spend" society of the late 80s, "Anything's possible with the Woolwich".

Personal success

Mike Walsh has just completed a major survey into 80s consumer attitudes. He concludes: "Mrs Thatcher's revolution is succeeding, because everybody is now into personal success. People, rather than wanting to keep up with the Jones's, want to keep apart from the Jones's."

In light of such findings the Woolwich has created a new image, light years away from its previous incarnation — in the 70s, commercials included union meetings where "Are you with us lads?" was met by "No, we're with the Woolwich". That kind of representation would never make the drawing board these days, conjuring up as it does a collective, working-class solidarity.

The current Woolwich commercial finds us within the designer-clad walls of a home where a couple play Goa languidly on the floor. This lifestyle tag has been happily taken on by the Halifax Building Society as well, as the battle for consumers' wallets and minds increases.

Taking on two strategies for the same product — a cash card — advertising agency Dorlands drew

> *The message is that in a modern world of mistrust and confrontation, both at home and work, supreme and smart oneupmanship is the only way to get ahead*

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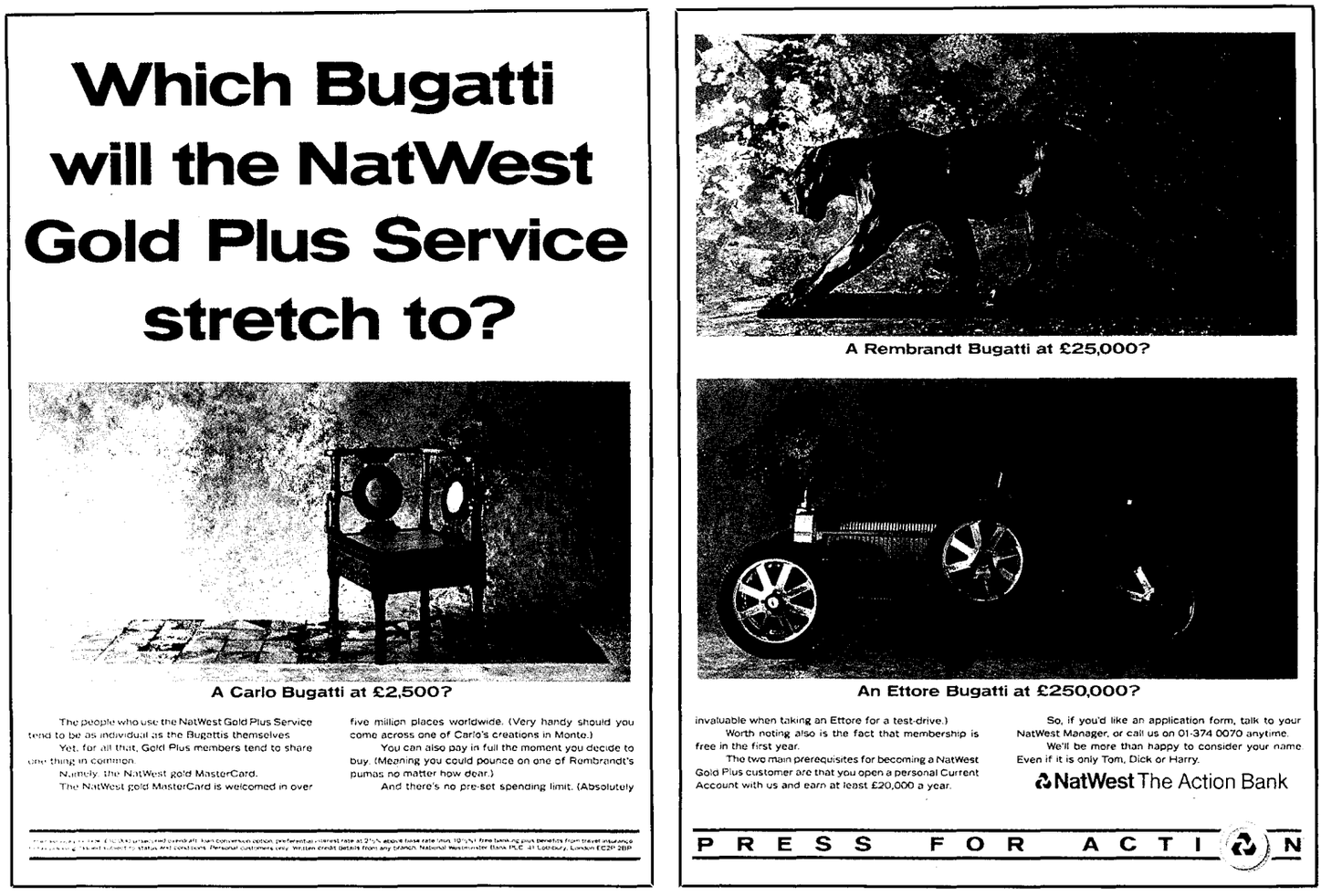
Which Bugatti will the NatWest Gold Plus Service stretch to?
A Carlo Bugatti at £2,500?
The people who use the NatWest Gold Plus Service tend to be as individual as the Bugattis themselves.
Yet, for all that, Gold Plus members tend to share one thing in common.
Namely, the NatWest gold MasterCard.
The NatWest gold MasterCard is welcomed in over five million places worldwide. (Very handy should you come across one of Carlo's creations in Monte.)
You can also pay in full the moment you decide to buy. (Meaning you could pounce on one of Rembrandt's pumas no matter how dear.)
And there's no pre-set spending limit. (Absolutely invaluable when taking an Ettore for a test-drive.)
Worth noting also is the fact that membership is free in the first year.
The two main prerequisites for becoming a NatWest Gold Plus customer are that you open a personal Current Account with us and earn at least £20,000 a year.
So, if you'd like an application form, talk to your NatWest Manager, or call us on 01-374 0070 anytime.
We'll be more than happy to consider your name. Even if it is only Tom, Dick or Harry.
A Rembrandt Bugatti at £25,000?
An Ettore Bugatti at £250,000?
NatWest The Action Bank
PRESS FOR ACTION

Get into a guilt-free overdraft: one with individualised snob-appeal for those earning £20,000 or over, or Vector for those still carrying filofaxes

up two plans of attack, both of which wholeheartedly encapsulate the spending spree culture at the expense of yesterday's "save now" ethic. Dorlands seductively woos the teen market with a classic Thatcherite dreamland. A young couple walk down a glittering High Street to the insistent tune of "The best things in life are free, but you can give them to the birds and bees. I want money". A fast-cut pop video style throws up images of materialistic goodies from cars to guitars as the young girl harangues her longsuffering partner for more money. It does not make for comfortable viewing, and has been widely acknowledged as the classic Thatcherite commercial. John Stubbings, board director at Dorlands, defends this accusation: "When you're 18 the only reason you work is actually to get money to buy things, so you could say the 'Money' cashcard commercial does celebrate spending. But what it is really doing is actually owning up to the fact that's what money is for."

"Money's" older brother is the classic "Easy Like Sunday Morning" commercial which, like Vector and the Woolwich, embraces a fantasy world of materialism. An archetypal youth hero, who would be comfortable in any youth-oriented ad, moves casually around his chicly kitsch Wapping loft in the misty Hogarthian streets of London on a Sunday morning. *Sunday Times* and a milk bottle in hand, he strolls, after a stop at the cashpoint machine, back to his pad and a thirsty cat. Alone, self-satisfied and clearly wealthy, he represents an ideal the financial institutions have identified as our pipedream.

The cumulative effect of these commercials is to perpetuate an idea of easy money, quick to get hold of and easily disposed of. Images of any hard graft are totally absent, because according to Wally Olins "the people who make these commercials and the people who commission them don't judge people at work as particularly interesting, glamorous or attractive." Barclays did concede to "reality" recently by showing how the bank could help if you happened to run a plastic duck factory — but that almost surreal scenario is one of only a handful which acknowledges that the product "money" has come from somewhere.

What the commercials quite happily do is perpetuate a myth, conceived in the offices of Charlotte Street and wine bars of Soho, that money comes easy, and seductive "lifestyle" images are the acceptable norm. A month after one of the most socially and economically unjust budgets of the century, there seems something immoral about the rampant promotion of money as a panacea for all troubles. What the commercials do is target only the "haves", while the "have nots" become further ignored, sinking slowly into a rapidly expanding underclass. For those cruelly manipulated by the dreams of the "haves" life is the very worst. Consumer credit stands at £3 billion, 60,000 mortgages are in arrears and 21,000 repossessions by building societies took place last year.

Critics say that financial advertising can be held partly responsible for our spending spree culture. The admen respond that they simply pick up on embryonic trends and throw them back at the consumer. Peter Bear, board director at the Midland's advertising agency, Allen Brady and Marsh, concludes: "Advertising does reflect what is going on in life. It doesn't try to forge ahead of society. It rides on the back of trends and in doing so fuels them a little." If that is right, it leaves a pretty shallow set of examples for us to aspire to. □

Sally Rowland is a researcher on Channel 4's "The Media Show", which screens a report on financial advertising on Tuesday, 12 April.

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Books

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen; would you give a big hand to the boys *in the* band

Michael, Don and Mark get laid

The latest venture by Fourth Estate, winner of the Sunday Times' *Small Publisher of 1987 award, is a fiction package for the Sammy and Rosie generation.* **BARNEY HOSKYNS** *investigates*

THE QUICK END is a new thing in British fiction: the author as pop group, three gaunt youths who might once have been, say, The Cure, but who have instead opted to pool their resources and make a three-headed assault on the elegant niceties of contemporary British prose.

Protégés, of sorts, of the exiled New Yorker Kathy Acker, they've given readings together at London's Riverside Studios and attracted sell-out audiences of hip-hop polymaths. On the cover of this paperback original **The Quick End** (Fourth Estate, £6.95) — their naked torsos, emblazoned with a jumble of postmodernist hieroglyphics, might easily have been posed for an album sleeve.

The Quick End claims that it's concerned with making fiction "a potent and compelling force once again" and proffers three "novellas" — Bracewell's "Missing Margate", Watson's "The Fear of Heaven" and Edwards' "Eat Your Elders" — as an initial sally. All have one thing in common, an obsession with the decay and rottenness of British civilisation, though each treats it in a very particular way (Bracewell's world is the same Media London as that of his recently-published *Crypto-Amnesia Club*; the landscapes of Watson and Edwards are more shifting and uncertain). Occasionally this obsession becomes so splenetic it suggests those films Norman Stone so loves to hate: *The Last Of England, Sammy And Rosie Get Laid*.

In "Missing Margate" a brilliant millionaire architect expresses his loathing for London's "bastard yuppies" by staging a personal apocalypse and blowing up his most revered buildings. In "The Fear of Heaven" the protagonist J drifts round the railways of England and finds his alienation mirrored in ruined landscapes. Finally, in "Eat Your Elders", the dumb narrator rants and rages against his elders in a deranged parade of figures both surreal and allegorical. The world views are markedly different — Bracewell's bilious, Edwards' grotesque, Watson's comparatively wistful — but the Britain seems to be the same.

Bracewell's hero Max de Winter (yes, his wife *is* called Rebecca) dreams of a decent, wartime England free of compact discs and BMWs and illiterate gliterati bitching at private views. One senses that, like Merril in *The Crypto-Amnesia Club*, he is the author's self-projection, albeit a more glamorously misanthropic one; senses, too, that Bracewell's detestation of Mediated London masks an uncomfortable desire to be a more prominent part of it. Mark Edwards' unnamed and polymorphous "I" is even more disgusted — "when someone dies in England," he observes, "he or she becomes a vampire on the living" — and "Eat Your Elders" is the only one of these texts to flirt with the scatalogical. In a crudely Bataille-like denunciation of religion a priest pisses on the narrator while sanctimoniously counselling him. "Ghosts of England" pursue Don Watson's hero, but "The Fear of Heaven" is primarily concerned with a more European kind of *amour fou*.

Unfortunately spleen does not potent and compelling fiction guarantee. Throughout these texts the writing is characterised by jejune satire, inept metaphors and a surfeit of unnecessary adjectives. When Bracewell's de Winter decides that he should "leave for some place of historic interest and natural beauty that is the loose change rattling about in history's charity box" you wonder why he bothered.

Don Watson has written some fine things as a pop journalist but too much of "The Fear of Heaven" reads like an unintentional parody of *Last Year in Marienbad*. The language is clotted with adjectives like "muffled", "etched","enfolded", "shadowed"; clotted, too, with refer-

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ences to Orpheus and Eurydice, Cain and Abel, Narcissus and Echo.

Ultimately none of his spectral personae (a "succession of thin girls in love with death", no less) is made accessible enough to hold our attention through the fog of allusion and over-description.

As for Edwards, when he isn't simply unintelligible his infantile petulence completely exhausts one's patience. In the closing sections of "Eat Your Elders" the narrator turns into a delirious Caliban tyrannised by the ultimate elder, "King Prospero of the Isle of Dogs". Doubtless the author had just seen Derek Jarman's *Tempest*.

A quick end to this one, I fear. □

Barney Hoskyns' most recent book, Say It One Time for the Broken Hearted *— a study of "the country side of Southern Soul" — was published earlier this year by Fontana.*

Cuckoo in the nest

Michèle Roberts

The Fifth Child
DORIS LESSING *Cape* £9.95

DORIS LESSING's new novel harks back to certain of her short stories in terms of its brevity, its succinct expansion of a single idea, its concern with a moral dilemma acted out by types rather than fullblooded characters. It exemplifies the prose rhythms, vocabulary and narrative stance to be found in her story "To Room Nineteen", for example, which details the progress towards suicide of a nice, intelligent, middle-class wife and mother driven to peaceful despair when she abandons her earth-mother persona and finds chaos underneath it. *The Fifth Child*, dealing similarly with the issues of maternal choice and commitment, pushes deeper into exploring what might happen to a woman acting out what are supposed to be her natural urges to reproduce.

Doris Lessing has always been interested in presenting characters who are out of step with currently fashionable ideological positions. Depending on the reader's own point of view and willingness to be challenged, this can seem either like intellectual boldness or weary cynicism; can reinforce notions of a secret essential self or encourage speculation about the absurdity of the personal ego. So her latest heroine, Harriet, is out of tune with the Swinging Sixties: she has curly hair when other women go for smooth, straight coiffures, wears blue flowered frocks rather than sexily witty vamp outfits, is not psychologically disturbed, does not come from a broken home or lead a wild life, is still a virgin in her twenties and wants to have a lot of children once she has met the right man and married him. Lessing's omniscient narrator gives us Harriet's view of "the selfish and greedy sixties" in order subsequently to comment ironically upon it. Harriet is eventually forced to wonder whether selfishness might not sometimes be a good thing.

Harriet and David marry, find their dream home with many bedrooms and a big garden, start to raise their longed-for family. Fulfilment and contentment envelop them. But things go wrong with the advent of the fifth, unplanned, child.

Ben turns out to be a monster: his aggression turns to violence, then to murderousness. He is committed to an institution from which Harriet guiltily rescues him when she learns the appalling regime of isolation, deprivation and confinement practised there. Ben's return home breaks up family life, deeply disturbs the other children and drives the two loving parents apart.

The novel is obviously addressing a huge and pertinent question: what do parents do with a child they can't love and whose unloveability seems rooted, genetically, in his very being? That the problem is to do with evolutionary mishap is the conclusion reached by Harriet, anyway. Confronted with a specialist eager to talk about rejecting mothers she bursts out: "He's not human, is he? . . . How do we know what kinds of people-races, I mean creatures different from us, have lived on this planet? In the past, you know? . . . How do we know that dwarves or goblins or hobgoblins, that kind of thing, didn't really live here?"

The decision tht Ben is a throwback, a prehistoric alien, brings Harriet a certain peace and consolation. As she slowly becomes certain of The Truth, psychoanalytical explanations (including the '60s Laingian variety which Lessing herself once espoused and then repudiated) are firmly ruled out, as are sociological ones. Lessing may be intending to confront weak-kneed liberals with the brutal reality of facts: certain humans live outside culture, cannot be rescued, become dropouts, thugs, rioters; nothing can be done about it.

I quarrel with the implications of these views but, in any case, Lessing disappointingly avoids pursuing them. Eventually Ben simply drifts away, leaving home to live his goblin life elsewhere. Perhaps it's the only solution a desperate parent can wish for. □

Women who walk the mean streets

Jane Dibblin

Lyn: A Story of Prostitution
JUNE LEVINE and LYN MADDEN *Women's Press* £4.95
Autobiography of Gloria Lovatt
GLORIA LOVATT and PAM COCKERILL *Colombus* £9.95

IN WAS 3.30 IN THE MORNING when John Cullen took Lyn Madden to the house of a mutual friend, Dolores Lynch. There, he forced Lyn to stand guard as he set light to the house: she heard the screams of Dolores, her mother and aunt as they were eaten by the flames. Dolores died two days later with 80 per cent burns.

Dolores and Lyn were both prostitutes in Dublin. John had been pimp and boyfriend to each in turn. Until that night, Lyn had been convinced that there was no way to escape John's beatings and sexual torture: she was trapped in dependency and obsessive infatuation. But, seeing his immense cruelty to the three women he murdered, she was shocked into detatchment and, finally, driven to turn him over to the police.

John took out a £5,000 contract on Lyn; for the 18 months it took for him to come to trial she needed an armed police guard. Even today she lives in hiding: John murdered Dolores out of revenge and Lyn is in no doubt that he will try and do the same to her.

Gloria Lovatt is also a former prostitute. Like **Lyn**, her story — **A Nice Girl Like Me** — is the result of friendship with a woman journalist. Both books are also accounts of women battling for survival: women who began turning tricks out of economic necessity and resourcefulness (and which woman who has suffered poverty hasn't considered prostitution?). Their prostitution was also a form of rebellion, of putting two fingers up at the establishment which had tried to break their spirits: both had been in children's homes; Gloria had been raped by the man in charge of hers. When Gloria finished with her first punter she experienced "a feeling of triumph that after all the pain they'd caused me I had discovered a way to get even with men". Lyn "was convinced that because she was not clocking in and out of a low paid job, she was beating the system".

But, having been a means of survival, prostitution soon became the very thing that the women had to survive: the pimps, the clients, the humiliation. To do so required economic alternatives and a strong sense of self. Being born to poor women who weren't able to look after their daughters' material or emotional needs had not provided them with either. Being beaten and raped by men they'd looked to for love and comfort had further eroded their sense of self-worth.

That Gloria managed to leave a violent boyfriend and flee a would-be pimp who broke her ribs, and that Lyn eventually got free of John, are tributes to a will to survive that has withstood continual assaults.

Both women are adamant that prostitution is the most lethal of all dead ends. Through their stories they both emerge as funny, feisty, warm, hurt women, at times shrewd and canny, at others so wanting to love and be loved that reason and intuition fall away. But this is *despite* what they've been through: forget the images of happy hookers, big hearted mamas who take their clients to their ample bosoms, whores who have the upper hand. These stories are of women subjected to extremes of violence and brutality. They stand as testimonies which belie the liberal "their bodies to do as they please" analysis; belie equally the English Collective of Prostitutes' Wages for Housework line that prostitutes are involved in a rebellion which is a cornerstone of a female revolution.

The cover of *A Nice Girl Like Me* is a lurid parody of a prostitute. It is deceptive, for the story is not sensationally written. Indeed, the first-person voice used by Pam Cockerill is more successful than June Levine's third-person treatment of Lyn: Gloria retains some control, some limit on what we are allowed to see of her, and remains the central subject of her story; the reader is given a window into Lyn's life which at times opens into voyeurism. Perhaps intentionally, it makes for uncomfortable reading. Oral historians take note. □

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All that is solid melts into air

Catherine Hall

The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class
ed. JANET WOLFF and JOHN SEED *Manchester* £35

"THE BOURGEOISIE historically has played a most revolutionary part," declared Marx and Engels in a famous passage in the *Communist Manifesto*:

> The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society . . . All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.

Such grand claims for the bourgeoisie abounded in mid-19th-century England. From James Mill's *Essay on Government*, with its panegyric on the middle class, to Mrs Diana Mulock Craik's adulation of middle-class virtues in her sensationally popular *John Halifax, Gentleman*, middle-class writers, politicians and intellectuals were convinced with Marx and Engels that the bourgeoisie was indeed "playing a most revolutionary part".

Its revolution was effected not only in the mills, factories, corn exchanges and stock exchanges associated with capitalist enterprise, but in political and cultural life. From its successful insistence on the representation of its own male heads of households to the building of Town Halls, from the establishment of circulating libraries to the Literary and Philosophical Institutions, the middle class effected the transformation of social relations and cultural production. Far from being compelled, however, to face with its sober senses the real conditions of life, the bourgeoisie was also profoundly successful in developing ideologies which made sense of this new social and political world — not only for themselves, but for other classes — and which secured its hegemonic power.

This is one view; it has, however, long been out of fashion. The orthodoxy of the last 20 years, shared by Perry Anderson and Tom Nairn on the one hand and Martin Wiener on another, has been that the English middle class was a failure, that it never defeated the aristocracy and remained culturally subordinate to the landed, doomed by its narrow Utilitarianism to marginality. The ambitiously titled *The Culture of Capital* — which opens with a critique of the failure thesis by Simon Gunn — is one strike in the welcome attempt now being made by historians to re-think the place of the middle class in 19th-century politics and culture, and to pay it its due.

Left historians of the 1970s realised that it was not enough for the left to focus all its efforts on recovering, re-writing and celebrating the history of the working class. It was also important to explore the power of the rulers. At the same time, feminists were challenging classical definitions of class, while cultural theorists were developing new modes of representational analysis. All these elements are present in *The Culture of Capital* — a series of essays which are the fruit of collective interdisciplinary work between social historians, sociologists and art historians, and which aim to take culture — specifically the visual culture of the urban industrial bourgeoisie — seriously.

If your image of the 19th-century entrepreneur, Dear Reader, is of Mr Gradgrind or Mr Bounderby refusing imagination and living in a world of hard facts, then think again. These entrepreneurs were not philistines who worked all the hours God gave them, only to plough their accumulations back. Far from it; they spent large amounts of time and money cultivating the arts, funding exhibitions, commissioning artists, paying for their children to have painting lessons. As John Seed shows for Manchester and Caroline Arscott for Leeds, bourgeois patronage of the arts was well established before mid-century and the rhetoric of the civilising virtues of the arts and sciences provided ground on which could meet all sections of a middle class divided by religion, economic position and politics. Culture, in other words, was a point of unification for the class. At the same time, of course, as Alan White argues in an essay on Sheffield, cultural institutions were sites for the playing out of tensions both *within* the class and between classes.

The essays in the first half of the book build on a well established tradition within middle-class historiography and discuss the cultural institutions of the middle class and the political economy of art. The second half is more concerned with some of the cultural products bought by the middle class and questions relating to the analysis of cultural representations. Janet Wolff, for example, argues that on the whole gender divisions were both reinforced and maintained by cultural ideologies and practices. A fascinating essay by Caroline Arscott queries the attribution of fixed meanings to particular cultural products through a discussion of the commissioning of "The Awakening Conscience": a famous painting by Holman Hunt which, in Ruskin's view, represented the recognition of sin by the fallen woman. The painting was bought by the highly successful owner of a Manchester engineering firm, a man who was deeply committed to a domesticated hearth and home. Arscott looks at the circumstances in which the painting was commissioned and the possible meanings which may have been attached to it, in the process offering alternative readings to that of Ruskin and arguing that "it is impossible to ascribe a single unified ideological function to the picture". Similarly the last essay, on visual representations of the 19th-century city (by Caroline Arscott and Grizelda Pollock with Janet Wolff), challenges received art-historical wisdom and argues for a broader view of representation, proposing certain kinds of access which paintings or prints might give us to historical understanding.

The Culture of Capital is somewhat uneven in tone, moving between well established routes and more untrodden paths. Hence my unease with the title, which promises more than it delivers. I certainly agree that there *was* a culture of capital and that the English bourgeoisie, far from collapsing into subordination to the artistocracy, fought long and hard to assert its distinctive cultural forms. These essays contribute to that larger debate; they also leave many unanswered questions. The connections between the cultural institutions of the class and a *bourgeois* class identity are suggested rather than demonstrated and I would still love to know more about what paintings and engravings were hanging on the office walls and drawing-room walls of the urban middle class and in what sense they might suggest that "all that is solid melts into air". □

Out of anger: feminist sf

Roz Kaveney

Busy about the Tree of Life
PAMELA ZOLINE *Women's Press* £4.95
In the Chinks of the World Machine
SARA LEFANU *Women's Press* £5.95

THERE IS LITTLE in the work of Pamela Zoline to tie it with links of blood to sf. It is nonetheless historically the case that the greater part of this volume, itself the greater part of her output, has been published in sf magazines and anthologies, and that one of her stories, "The Heat Death of the Universe", is, in retrospect at least, one of those moments when shifts in the general direction of the sf genre can be defined.

Zoline is a fabulist whose narrative strategies include the satirical exaggeration of current trends and the suggestion of new ways of looking at how things *are*: ways that involve the ordering both of emotions and scientific principles, but the former as often as not with a refusal of verisimilitude and the latter as a strategy parallelled not by the use of further scientific texts, but the use of tourist guides and cook books. When Zoline outlines the ways in which children might be kidnapped and rehomed as a strategy for deterring nuclear conflict, she does so as a piece of rhetoric, a way of showing the monstrousness of nuclear deterrence, rather than as an adventure story or as a political programme. When she shows the history of a set of bloodlines doomed to deaths by air, water, earth and fire respectively, and suggests that their ultimate heir, the child Gabriel, is doomed to death in some universal holocaust, she is playing games with the literary possibilities of multiplying disaster without producing deep boredom or mere bad-taste frivolity.

"The Heat Death" is a text with many meanings, one of which is an examination of the way in which the scientific concept of entropy might illuminate the expectations which patriarchal society, in its early 1960s incarnation, might hold of an intelligent middle-class woman; another of which is a certain joy in the decision to allow chaos its way.

Zoline is decidedly more radical in her use of technical devices, without being obsessive, than the main body of sf writers. The device which characterises **Busy about the Tree of Life** most especially is the use of kaleidoscopic shifts of perspective, both between narrative strands and

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between narrative, expository, parodic and confessional modes. In "Sheep" we see a variety of wounded pastorals, all of them part dream, part the stories which an implied author tells in her head in a doomed attempt to sleep: stories which involve in Western and spy thriller and confused half-dozing surrealism those sheep which it is traditional to try to count (and cook). And the cooking of those sheep, the elaboration of recipes, is itself a pregnant metaphor: we will all bake together when we bake.

The three more recent stories in this volume are all in large measure meditations on and protests against the possibility of mass nuclear extinction — a threat which has rekindled Zoline as a writer after her early and powerful protest against the tyranny of the mundane.

The protest story, like the utopian story, is an important part of the way in which science fiction adds spice to the fictional mainstream — and learns from that mainstream lessons that it might not glean from its usual contemplation of itself. The stories of Zoline are important to the development of sf without necessarily being more than marginally sf themselves.

SARA LEFANU'S **In the Chinks of the World Machine: Feminism and Science Fiction** is good on the importance of Zoline's "Heat Death" as a story which helped, somewhat ahead of time, to establish a feminist discourse in sf. She also rightly points to the rarity of that discourse during the main part of the supposedly radical New Wave sf of the 1960s. She perhaps underestimates the extent to which it was historically necessary for the New Wave to start subverting the stock assumptions of the field before it became possible for the major women writers of the '70s to come out into the open, with that preparedness to question turned to the crucial question of sexual relationships and power. She also insists on underplaying the extent to which women's sf before the development of the Women's Movement, and the main feminist tradition within the genre, can be seen as making protests against things as they were. For example, she fails to see that what makes the mediaeval adventurings of C.L. Moore's *Jirel of Joiry* fascinating and subversive is less the jejune device of giving a woman a sword than the surreal imagery of the landscapes through which Jirel wanders.

Further, while Lefanu discusses many of the key questions raised by the involvement of feminist women in both commercial sf and the utopian and protest traditions tied to it — and her prolonged discussions of individual writers are often exemplary — she only partly answers the question of why writers like Charnas and Russ have continued to write work closely identified with the traditional commercial genre. She neglects the extent to which feminist sf took on board the tradition of polemical argument with and echoing of earlier stories, which is a standard mode of the genre as a whole. In that way Russ' *We who are about to* deconstructs a whole sub-genre of space-faring castaway stories, by asking what is in it for the individual woman expected to be bred for the greater good. Lefanu's account neglects the extent to which feminist sf has derived much of its strength from the anger necessary when confronting much sf by men. □

PAPERBACKS

Charlotte gets married and other sad stories

LIVES ARE ABOUT loss; literature is about loss. Former snake owner Ronnie Kray, fearing the loss of his reputation, shoots dead the man who has been honest and reckless enough to call him a "fat pouf". The crazy Krays, thanks to publicity like John Dickson's **Murder without Conviction** (Sphere, £2.99) and the unfailing English attraction to the fallacy of the charming crook (Robin Hood, Raffles, Ronnie Biggs; but not Pete Sutcliffe, Myra Hindley, Denis Nielsen) have their reputations intact 20 years after conviction.

The author and former member of The Firm is attempting to portray the loss of his own innocence. He describes the occasions when, as a "young man" pushing 40, he arrives in London from the north, swiftly and eagerly joins the gang after a chance introduction, then spends his days drinking, gambling, collecting protection money and silently witnessing the odd murder.

Did he ever draw blood himself? He doesn't tell us. He does want to let the reader know what a nice, ordinary man he is. He even thanks his wife in the dedication for allowing him to come clean after all these years with these smarmily down-to-earth true confessions which enable him to make yet more money out of a sickening, shabby past.

Another masturbatory tale, but with more charm and conviction, is the appallingly honest autobiography of ballerina Gelsey Kirkland, who is **Dancing on My Grave** (Penguin, £3.95) for a few hundred pages, until she finds true love and, in the classical ballet, professional fulfillment. Other peoples' obsessions can sometimes seem glamorous but Kirkland gives a vivid picture of the baffling self-destruction that somehow replaces her initial noble intention of perfecting her art. The batty ballerina practically starves herself to death, has affairs with all the wrong men and suffers several self-inflicted bouts with the plastic surgeon's knife — terrified of losing the love she hasn't yet found and the talent she doesn't quite believe in, but intelligent enough to realise that a psychiatrist who says, "You really should be grateful that you are someone who can go into the city, do your gig, come back, and be able to pay for your stay with us," probably can't save her.

Salvation occurs in a few pages at the end of the book. Salvation always happens this way; it always worries me. It leaves room for a sequel and maybe a suicide later on.

Manley Halliday is "too brave for suicide". He has lost his wife, his fortune, his looks, even his pay cheque for a few chapters, but **The Disenchanted** by Budd Schulberg (Allison & Busby, £3.99) allows him the deathbed reprieve of knowing that his talent is still there.

This almost perfect book is the perfect example of a writer who has a story to tell and the ability to write it. Set in Hollywood, it *needs* its death scene, charismatic characters, sharp dialogue and broken heart. The flashback scene telling us about Manley's first meeting and glamorous life with his now broken wife Jere is too much like a swift synopsis of a melodramatic script — contrasting youth, beauty, love and money with Halliday's pathetic present — and that's why it works. Whether or not Halliday is Scott Fitzgerald or whether it's possible for a fictional character to be completely anyone detracts nothing from the book's grace.

Perhaps worse than a book with no story at all is a whole book devoted to a rehashed tale — worse, a "no apologies" fictionalised account that irritatingly imagines an already well documented life.

In **Path to the Silent Country** (Penguin, £2.95) Lynne Reid Banks fantasies her way through Charlotte Brontë's last years when she is suffering the lonely loss of her siblings. The low point is the seduction scene where the toothless Charlotte and the trembling curate she's married lose their virginity in a hotel on their way to Ireland. Charlotte has a cold and isn't really in love with Arthur — yet — but we are assured that she is a woman of hidden sensual passions, now let loose, who "relieves his tormented manhood of its mysterious restraints".

It is difficult to decide what Lynne Reid Banks is trying to achieve, apart from writing a sequel to her earlier book on the Brontës, but, if she wants to be risqué, her euphemisms fail her and, if she wants an honest portrait, why not heed her own advice and stick with Mrs Gaskell?

Wideacre (Penguin, £3.95), another book about loss, has everything in it. Philippa Gregory's heroine is determined not to lose the ancestral home to the weak male heir and plots to keep it with lies, murder, incest, betrayal, sado-masochism in the attic and the wholehearted selfishness we expect from a best-selling fictional character. In the end she's stabbed by the lover she crippled earlier on in an animal trap, but never stopped loving. Not very convincing? Don't read it unless you want to be undemandingly entertained.

Another tale of loss is the thriller **Zorn** (Penguin, £3.95), the lonely story by Jonah Jones of a man so overcome with grief at (among other things) the deaths of his lover and child that he loses his marbles slightly and lives in seclusion by the sea, waiting for them to walk out of the water. Even worse, as his past unfolds we discover that he was a Jew in fascist Germany. The climax occurs when the town tart is murdered and Zorn's only friend suspects him. An exciting, quick read, this is the right book for reflective hermits who don't require a happy ending.

And a book with apparently nothing to do with loss is the memoir of a less famous turd-burglar than Ron Kray, the policeman Harry Daley. If the reader can get over the title, **This Small Cloud** (Weidenfeld, £6.95), his recollections of everyday life, combine a curious mix of casual venom and boyish glee, though he neglects to answer the big question: was he a member of the Masons?

Carole Morin

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Best rhymes with zest

John Lucas

The Automatic Oracle
PETER PORTER *Oxford* £4.95
Eldorado
WILLIAM SCAMMELL *Peterloo Poets* £4.50
Transit
BRIAN TAYLOR *London Magazine Editions* £4.50
The Sunset Maker
DONALD JUSTICE *Anvil* £5.95

AS PETER PORTER notes in his poem "Try a Triolet": " The nearly mindless triolet/is the one form that Auden shirked." Presumably the saving word "nearly" is invoked to defend his own decision to try some in **The Automatic Oracle**.

Needless to say, he handles the form with characteristic aplomb; and in other such poems as "Spiderwise" and "The Pantoum of the Opera" he makes the task of writing in difficult rhyming stanzas look as easy as Auden himself did. Which isn't of course to say that Porter *is* Auden. It is, however, possible to say that there seems a new — or, at the very least, renewed — playfulness about this collection, one that makes it a much more enjoyable volume than his last, *Fast Forward*. Where that came dangerously near to achieving no more than a settled glumness, the new book is a bracing, witty and extremely inventive affair. There's more of Ariel about it than there is of Prospero.

How well Porter can rhyme, for example, and how outrageously he will choose not to do so. (You have to possess all sorts of confidence to push "chariot" up against "carry it".) So, although the characteristic Porter preoccupations dominate many of the poems, they nevertheless do so in ways that feel welcomingly fresh. Even the melancholia has about it a zest that displaces the enervate rhythms he's sometimes seemed too ready to adopt. Thus "Paradise Park" concludes mordantly but — yes, let's say it, beautifully — with the following stanza:

> You may sit at glass-topped tables with white wine,
> Or play the board games with commanding titles —
> Conspiracy Theory, Life Support, The Pursuit of
> the Millennium —
> But nobody gives up early, there is always a smile
> Just behind the carousel's blind horse which hints
> That being born is coming into pleasure and so who
> Is waiting out there for you to be unfaithful to?

Enervativeness is not something you would ever associate with William Scammell. If anything, the brio can seem a bit too determined: a sort of racing energy that leaves the reader panting breathlessly behind the poet as one more stanza bounds into place, packed with ideas and (new to his latest volume **Eldorado**) slightly recherché diction. Perhaps for this reason the poems I like best are those where the energy is reined in sufficiently to allow its subject to develop at a more measured pace. "Coming of Age in NW3", for example, excellently produces an account of early love/lust, its tone neatly balanced between beady reflectiveness and something a good deal more vulnerable. Tilt too far in either direction and you'd end up with bitchiness or sentimentality.

The tone is especially well held in perhaps the finest poem in the volume, "Eclogue: Clerk of the Weather". This comes to rest with a speaker remarking of Dorothy Wordsworth that: "all the words were spent/and bought her a last quiet place/to know the Bedlam of her face/fronting the worst that time had done/and all the elements, but one." To redeem the cliché of "spent" words, as Scammell does here, is no mean achievement, and altogether the poem is characterised by a taut pathos whose source is a genuine imaginative intelligence.

Indeed, it strikes me that Scammell's tone is the most valuable thing about him: it guarantees a kind of honesty which is difficult to achieve, still more difficult to sustain; and which may, then, explain the volume's failures. But since the successes outweigh them —they include a number of fine translations which suggest that some enterprising publisher should offer Scammell a hefty advance in order to get from him a fat volume of his versions of Hugo — there are excellent reasons for buying this collection.

There are also excellent reasons for buying **Transit**.

Brian Taylor's impressive first volume is chiefly remarkable for its combination of deadpan narrative and highly charged eroticism. The main body of poems, "Ways of Henut Wedjbu", is a sequence which focuses on a young girl and her relationship with men (mostly) and which withholds, teasingly and sometimes infuriatingly, a fully accountable meaning.

The local effects can be extraordinary. (For example, the image of Henut "sitting on the crest/ of the waterfall, white water/surging out between her tanned thighs.") Yet, for all its skill, the volume as a whole is too literary for its own good. No matter how super-charged the language may be it feels ultimately derivative, even to the extent of occasionally sounding like that most self-conscious, self-referential of poets, Wallace Stevens.

I'm afraid that this is equally true of Donald Justice, a poet whom I've much admired in the past but whose new collection **The Sunset Maker** amounts to not much more than a form of sonorous whingeing. Yes, he is immensely skilled, but why so many dying falls, why the darkness without extended wings? One way of answering this question is to point out that Justice is in thrall to a particularly damaging convention of American letters which takes melancholy as a synonym for cultural fastidiousness.

A different, less enchanted answer might involve stating that what Justice lacks is that "thunder" without whch saying "no" becomes little more than a self-pitying refusal to rejoice. □

A detective's lot is not a happy one

Nick Kimberley

EVERY TIME the private eye says goodbye, he dies a little; it's an occupational hazard: "For another moment I stared down at her face — a face no longer beautiful but a hundred years-of-hell old. Then I turned and started for the door." Faded beauty, regret, woman: it could be any one of a thousand private eye novels, any one of a hundred Robert Mitchum films. A twisted narrative brings the detective to the brink of fulfilment, but happiness — almost invariably a woman — fades before his eyes. He can only retreat into melancholia.

The quote above is from Howard Browne's **Halo in Blood** (No Exit, £3.99), the latest in its publisher's *Vintage Crime* series. First published in 1946, *Halo in Blood* is easily dismissed as sub-Chandler: that's Geoffrey O'Brien's judgment on the novel's hero, Paul Pine, in his study *Hardboiled America* (1981): "Like most of the derivative private eyes, he is able to mimic the moves of a Philip Marlowe, but without a trace of the real despair that hovers around Chandler's creation."

Certainly there's mimicry: like Marlowe, Pine has been hurt by love, but is recovering; he has a mistrust of the city cops and a penchant for painful unconsciousness after being tapped on the head with a blunt instrument. But, even by 1946, these had become generic signposts, self-consciously inserted to make the (male) reader feel at home. Expecting *Halo in Blood* to do without them is to deny the efficacy of genre. I'd also suggest that there is "real despair" here, as well as the epistemological mire that threatens every private eye: "I was so sure I knew all the answers. And all the time I didn't even know the questions."

The *Vintage Crime* series also includes Raoul Whitfield's **Green Ice** (No Exit, £3.50). Reviewing it as an import in the *NS* 18 months ago, I noted its "breathless power", "ellipitical dialogue" and its encapsulation of tough-guyness: "There would be action; my mind and body needed it." Breathless, elliptical action is what this series offers in abundance; without ever fully transcending its era, each novel is a vivid instance of the unequal mix of violence, sadness and humour which characterises hardboiled fiction.

Reprints continue to enrich our enjoyment of crime fiction; Pandora's *Women Crime Writers* series will be covered in next month's crime fiction review. Meanwhile, the *Blue Murder* series, like *Vintage Crime*, aims to cover the hardboiled/tough guy tradition. "Real despair" is again the keynote, at least in David Goodis' **The Burglar** (Simon & Schuster, £3.50). Goodis spent some time working in Hollywood; his cinematic sense of shade, colour, tone is apparent in the almost abstract sequence which opens *The Burglar*, first published in 1953: "At three in the morning it was dead around here and the windows of the mansion were black, the mansion dark purple and solemn against the moonlit velvet green of gently sloping lawn." This sumptuous colouring underlines the washed-out emotions of the central characters, criminals who pit themselves against life's nullity.

If this begins to sound overwrought, that's not inappropriate: Goodis' prose was fond of melodrama and portent. His fiction had a

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strong affinity for the criminal, establishing a moral order in the face of an unyielding world: "aside . . . from the stink of deceit and lies and the lousy taste of conniving and corruption, it was possible for a human being to live in this world and be honourable within himself." If a burglar "made his hauls with smoothness and finesse . . .and got away with the haul . . . he was an honourable man".

After a detailed account of a burglary which seems to establish his central character as master of his own destiny, Goodis then traps him in his own indecision. He becomes a puppet, tugged by the harsh propositions of his illicit trade. Love here is a death sentence: as one of his lovers (a woman called Gladden, something of a misnomer) says, "We're half in the grave." The moments when Goodis seems about to penetrate that gloom quickly pass as death comes closer — Goodis was crime fiction's Samuel Beckett.

The mood is entirely different in Charles Williams' **The Diamond Bikini** (Simon & Schuster, £3.50), an anti-authoritarian, populist romp in which a set of bumpkins outwit the forces of law, order and addle-brained bureaucracy. In the post-McCarthy era in which it appeared (first publication 1956) there must have been something distinctly un-American here. Even now, its irreverence in the face of political niceties is bracing, its vision of a carnival city on the outskirts of town distinctly appealing. Did these writers "intend" their differing visions, or did their now outmoded pulp mechanisms lead them to write so conclusively against the grain? Probably both.

But let's get out of the past . . . Charles Willeford's **Sideswipe** (Gollancz, £10.95) is his third novel depicting the increasingly unhappy Hoke Moseley, Miami homicide cop. Here, he retreats into catatonic inactivity in order to retire himself from the police force. All that rescues him from death-like seclusion is the fearsome psychopathology of Troy Louden, the only white criminal with an Affirmative Action training scheme and a bully with death in his heart. But he's also genuinely charming, despite being assessed "a criminal psychopath — I know the difference between right and wrong, but I don't give a shit". While Hoke self-pityingly wonders, "Christ, how in the hell could a man simplify his life?", Troy sets out on a gruesome path to riches. Old age, fading sexual desire, bulimia, a copper's "combat fatigue" — Willeford embraces all these before reducing such concerns to dust in the apocalyptic violence which fictional Miamis so effortlessly foster. □

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

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ARTS

Doing the "cross over" step in *Hollywood Shuffle*

A choice of Rambo or Sambo?

Black performers and filmmakers are caught on the horns of so many dilemmas that weaker souls would unpick themselves, climb down and give up the struggle. **JIM PINES** *examines the ways in which they cope — with particular reference to the new black US movie* Hollywood Shuffle

THE AMERICAN ACTRESS Olivia Cole (whose television credits include *Roots* and *Go Tell It on the Mountain*) shocked audiences during a recent panel discussion at the National Film Theatre.

Controversially, she introduced herself by insisting on putting inverted commas around the term black. There are no black people, nor white ones for that matter, she insisted, only people. She then went on to propose that black artists get out from under the comfortable "black" banner because it compromises their craft and, at the end

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of the day, is more a hindrance than an aid in their efforts to achieve professional legitimacy.

If Olivia Cole had left her intervention at that, everything would have been fine: we could have all gone away happily arguing about integrated casting. But, no, she carried on. First, she told the mainly black audience that the phenotypic or racial features usually attributed to "black" people do not really exist. Then she reminded us that her training at RADA — which included doing Restoration plays — was quintessentially non-racial and prepared her to become a professional actress full stop. This disavowal of race is an extreme position to have, even as a counter-irritant to rampant professional marginalisation. It is not an entirely *unpopular* view: many black actors and actresses would agree with the tenor of Cole's argument, if not the form in which it was expressed. Very few, however, choose to announce it publicly.

Every black performing artist will recognise the experiences depicted in Robert Townsend's very funny film, **Hollywood Shuffle** (Metro cinema until 5 May). It may not help them to get better parts in the future, but the film does succeed in lampooning the lunatic racism that informs casting practices and, hence, the bulk of screen images of black people. The underlying theme is, of course, integrated casting: the idea of black actors/actresses playing roles which are traditionally defined as "white parts". As someone says at one point in the film, "We'll never play Rambo until we stop playing Sambo." This statement seems politically suspect. Why should any black actor want to play a brainless thug? But, in reality, Rambo is quite a few notches above the stereotypical street-hustlers, pimps and prostitutes which have been the main fare for black actors and actresses since the heady "blaxploitation" 1970s.

There is little analysis as such in *Hollywood Shuffle* the emphasis is on exposition. The central character, Bobby Taylor (played by Townsend, who is also an actor by profession), is trying to make it in the business but constantly comes up against racial typecasting of the worst kind. White producers expect all blacks to perform according to popular notions of "being black": over-exaggerated shuffle, "incomprehensible" hip talk, a penchant for irrational outbursts of violence and so on. At best, they might get through as Eddie Murphy lookalikes. Otherwise, it is a very bad scene indeed, particularly if you have any pride in what you are and in what you are doing. Townsend cleverly merges this "serious" theme with genuine entertainment in a manner that is incisive without being shocking, relying almost entirely on humour and general mickey-taking.

Like Spike Lee's successful sex comedy, *She's Gotta Have It*, Townsend's film is an excellent example of "crossing over" — that is, making a black film which can appeal to white audiences as well. Of course, this process has been going on throughout the 1980s in a lot of black American music: Tina Turner is an extreme case, but the androgynous Michael Jackson still manages to hint at his "ethnic" roots, while Stevie Wonder brilliantly switches his approach. But the idea of crossing over has been less successful in films. The Hollywood black exploitation films of the 1970s — the popular *Shaft*, for example — were aimed primarily at young black audiences.

Spike Lee's film seemed to crack the nut and, not surprisingly, was applauded by many black independent filmmakers (particularly in America) for its successful penetration of the wider marketplace. *Hollywood Shuffle* has helped to reinforce the argument for a commercially oriented black (independent) cinema. However, it could be argued — rather perversely — that both Lee and Townsend have found a way of appealing to white audiences' voyeuristic fascination with black folks' mores, a fascination which has been becoming more intense during the post-civil rights (read de-politicised) late-'80s. This period has witnessed a number of major shifts in thinking around race and ethnicity in the United States and these shifts are aptly reflected in *She's Gotta Have It, Hollywood Shuffle* and, especially, Spike Lee's latest film *School Daze* (yet to be released in this country, although a box office disaster in America). It's no accident that these films are comedies. This seems to be the main genre at present within which black film and television producers can seriously engage with the American Dream.

The achievements of the civil rights movement cannot be denied, despite the ever deepening divisions between black and whites, but the Reagan Administration's massive assault on the cultural sector has imposed a new philosophy based on the importance of the marketplace, which a new generation of black cultural practitioners are having to take on board. Consequently, traditional civil rights motifs or earnest films with an explicit "message" — epitomised by the Sidney Poitier films of the 1950s-'60s are now regarded as unappealing, both politically and financially.

That is not to say that Spike Lee and Robert Townsend have copped out by not making this kind of film. What they have done is project a vibrantly new image of black characters and situations, going beyond the narrow parameters of race relations and doing so in an unapologetically commercial manner. Only one other black independent filmmaker has ever made this sort of cultural and commercial impact — Melvin Van Peebles with his iconoclastic film *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (1971) — although this frontal attack on the image of the meek civil rights black "hero" appealed to an audience caught up in the heat of Black Power. Lee and Townsend appear to have discovered a way of achieving a similar effect during a period of political malaise.

Ironically, many black American independents regard the British scene as healthier than their own and never fail to be impressed by the institutional funding structure within which some of their British counterparts can work. But, as Mrs Thatcher's vision impacts on the financial stability of the cultural sector, this is rapidly changing. Black independents here, particulary those operating within the workshop sector, are having seriously to address the question of production and financing structures which will best suit their interests in the 1990s. There is now strong incentive to get out from under the welfare-like regime of state funding and grant-aid, despite the fact that this can happen only at a price. It is a case of making the best of a swiftly deteriorating situation. The independents' demise, if that happened, would not be mourned by some (black) critics, who have compared their "experimental" (and, in my view, innovative) works unfavourably with the entertaining black American films. Never mind. If things get really bad, "There's always work at the post office." □

PHOTOGRAPHY

Blank cheques

Liz Heron

Mapplethorpe Portraits
National Portrait Gallery until 19 June

IN ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE's portrait of her, Gisèle Freund casts a backward shadow on her own portrait of Virginia Woolf. It's the only hint of knowingness in an otherwise smoothly fashioned study — the intelligent eagle face turned to meet the camera half-way, with a judicious amount of self-composure; neither too little nor too much, unlike so many of Mapplethorpe's sitters.

Freund in the style of Freund? It's sometimes hard to tell what Mapplethorpe's up to in the studio, since he so readily disturbs the contractual terms in force since the daguerrotype's heyday. Clearly, it's these little disturbances that people pay for.

One can assume various categories of sitter. There are of course the beautiful boys and girls, the flamboyant flora and fauna of SoHo's loft life. Then the artists, writers and performers; the aristocracy of what once (before Warhol held court) would have been called Manhattan's bohemiana. That ersatz blend of high-life/low-life chic has been Mapplethorpe's guarantee of fashionability.

Those we've just about never heard of, the New York gossip-column fodder or its aspirants, all hugely, or nouveau, rich, are the ones who write the biggest cheques. For a Mapplethorpe is a commodity, an artefact whose ownership and whose display on gallery walls confers the kind of exclusivity attached to portraiture prior to photography's invention — and the ensuing rush by the rising middle classes to acquire simulacra of themselves in the style of their betters.

Only those earliest daguerrotypes mimicked the painted miniature in its use of the profile. Photographic studio portraiture later abandoned it for all but the strictly emblematic. Mapplethorpe uses the profile for its geometry, its ornamental stylisation: Francesca Thyssen's jutting jaw, the head imperiously tilted back; Benno Premsela, still and smooth-skulled, like a piece of classical statuary; Jasper Conran sniffily looking down his nose.

It's certainly aristocratic in its severity, the single visible eye impervious to the one that surveys it through the lens, but it's the facial posture least amenable to the flattery of lighting. And, in creating icons of bourgeois respectability, the realist aesthetic favoured the face as the seat of character; the head perhaps turned at a discreet angle, not the brutally frontal view.

Mapplethorpe's interruption of such hardened codes takes many forms. Against all convention, some eyes are closed, betraying no signs of life, far less mirroring the soul. The only precedent for this dates again from early photography, and the peculiarly American custom, in the 1850s, of photographing the dead (perhaps because their relatives possessed no living image).

In any event, these are lidded selves, lost to others either through solipsism or imminent death.

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Excess and emptiness: Donald Sutherland and Cindy Sherman

Doris Saatchi's silvery mask of a head floats disembodied against blackness, sealed in ghostly self-absorption, while Alice Neel, who was to die soon after this portrait was made, has a Munch-like gaping mouth, so the private agony seems to break through into frenzied communication.

The portrait as condensation of character or social status is patently an anachronism for Mapplethorpe. These functions are equally irrelevant to many of his sitters, people for whom identity is some public fiction to be reinvented at will, all surface and performance. Indeed, for true denizens of the postmodern ether, a certain kind of status may depend on such instabilities. Permeable personae, throwaway selves to match the whirlwind obsolescence of consumerism, not so much disguise as self-manufacture from the outside in. Mapplethorpe's chameleon self-portraits take up the most transparently provocative attitudes in this refusal of identity; the carefree suicide of the author.

Gender fixities are playfully dissolved, swapped, scorned. Skin, hair, breasts, genitals offer so many flexible aesthetic opportunities, homoerotic symmetries, a vast spectrum of androgyny. If Mapplethorpe is a director of actors, he allows plenty of improvisation. There are disguises too, by way of narcissistic poses that are pure decoration; people as things, for whom any social interpretation is meaningless within the frame of the picture, since what's there relates to no continuum outside it.

This overperforming, largely by the extras, those with walk-on parts in Mapplethorpe's Manhattan, has its counterpart in the actors. Actors acting themselves as actors: Donald Sutherland, all saturnine melodrama; at the other dramatic extreme, Cindy Sherman, quite drained of character, tonally colourless, registering a pallid negative of all her own photofictions of femininity. As her own model, her own actress in front of her own camera, how else could she be herself in front of someone else's?

This self-conscious mode invites endless references. When Mapplethorpe photographed William Burroughs taking upward aim with what could be an airgun, a mini-rifle or maybe just a toy (hard to tell which), was he thinking of the Burroughs episode as a gun-toting William Tell, that ended so fatally for his wife?

Some underperform. Does Mapplethorpe deliberately unsettle them or leave them at a loss about how to respond? From a quartet of painters, the same pose — frontal head and shoulders, close-lipped level gaze — elicits a series of engagements with the camera that all seem subtly different but none of them quite right, from Lichtenstein's austerely guarded look to Warhol's faintly terror-stricken one.

The most uncomfortably calculated example of this is the double portrait of Philip Glass and Robert Wilson. The frame's split down the middle by two identical backdrops whose planes are unaligned. The one behind Glass is further back so it pulls him away from the camera. Wilson's looking straight at it, quite at ease, while Glass leans anxiously towards him as if he's shut out of the picture and trying to get into it. It confirms an intimation of ruthlessness, of indifference, of not a little sadism in Mapplethorpe's mastery. □

THEATRE

Capitalism's children

Paul Allen

All My Sons
ARTHUR MILLER *Royal Exchange, Manchester*
Death of a Salesman
ARTHUR MILLER *Birmingham Rep*

THERE IS SOME TERRIFIC rubbish currently being talked, inside the theatre and out, about the death of realism and narrative, the need to break free from literary theatre, the superior potency of the image and the notion that "theatricality" is somehow not to do with words and/or sense at all. "Oh, you mean you're still looking for content and meaning," people say disbelievingly and snigger behind their hands. It makes you want to smack them.

Well, maybe there is a place in the scheme of things for a kind of theatre which is as meaning-free as ill-made pop videos, but the audience is still there for moral seriousness, broad human understanding and the craft of story-telling. It is near-impossible to get a ticket for *All My Sons*.

If the British theatre remains strong in the very provincialism it inhabits and explores, Arthur Miller is one of its ideal writers. More than anyone else since Ibsen, and in some ways surpassing that gloomy Norwegian, he has made us look at and feel the experiences of the common man at the sort of depth enjoyed in the Greek tragedy whose tradition he is so clearly concerned to work in. In the regions he has never been away. Or, more accurately, *Death of a Salesman* has never been away. This is because of what I suspect is a slight misinterpretation of what the play is saying: all through the Thatcherite recession it has been described as "speaking to our time" because it tells of the slow fading of a man's life when he sinks into one of capitalism's troughs. See *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman* on successive nights and you can believe only that Miller is saying that capitalism is *always* like that.

For salesman Willy Loman, as Bill Wallis' performance makes very plain, is no sentimental hero. He is an intemperate, opinionated, patronising, vainglorious old man. He can't listen and therefore can't resolve the conundrum of his son's rebellious love. Travelling New England "on a smile and a shoeshine", pretending the buyers all like him, grabbing one tawdry extramarital affair for comfort, he scrapes enough together to keep up the payments on the old fridge and the car only to realise that, at 60, he is worth more dead than alive. It is to such a man — small, weak and dying — that Miller says "attention must finally be paid".

His wife Linda (Ann Firbank) finally gets to pay it at his graveside; they bury him on the day she finally pays off the mortgage, which you can

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interpret as a touch of melodrama or as Miller's readiness to keep up the emotional temperature, to push the knife of his indignation a little further into capitalism's fat carelessness. At no point that I can recall do Willy or Linda or any of the other characters actually talk about politics or even "the system". They would as easily question the air they breathe.

Joe Keller, the hero of *All My Sons*, is as rich a character as Willy Loman, even if the play itself has a less varied narrative flow and does include more in the way of spoken moralising. The story, drawn from life, is of a man who has sold flawed aeroplane parts to the air force in war time and forced his partner to take the rap. The gradual teasing out of the truth — which we know well in advance of the other characters — exercises a kind of awful grip but the story is given typical extra resonance because Keller's own son didn't come back from a flying mission and his wife Kate is still waiting in hope three years later. A lesser writer would have had the son disappear in one of Keller's own 'planes; Miller's point is that the system in which Keller got very rich makes him morally responsible for all the pilots who died.

But to describe Miller's plots is always to simplify them. Sure, the destructive nature of capitalism is his theme, but he works it out always in terms of human relationships muddied by the system. This is subtle and truthful but it does permit audiences to ignore the politics if they choose.

The plays also contain a striking sensitivity to the physical world. Willy Loman is at his most appealing when he talks of the two elm trees where he and his sons hung a swing. Before he dies he reflects on his garden, a plot never reached by the sun now tower blocks dwarf his house: "I've got nothing planted, nothing in the ground." The symbolism is heavy but it works because you can believe in the sudden hankering for natural growth.

Michael Meacham's production of *Death of a Salesman* is rather stolid and is weighed down by the need to move the set of the Lomans' house back and forward constantly so that room can be made for other scenes or Willy's imaginary conversations with an older brother, who is a kind of apostle for enterprise: "I walked into the jungle when I was 17 and I walked out at 21 and I was rich."

Gregory Hersov's *All My Sons* is marvellously cast throughout and achieves an all-round cohesion and energy which make it the best thing I have seen this year. Lynn Farleigh copes with the arguably potty and certainly distrait Kate Keller without apparent effort; if John Thaw finally stands out from his colleagues as Joe it is because of what he can do with the space between the words and the sudden shifts from confident bonhomie to fiery accusation (I think he really believes he earned his wretched fortune for his wife and children) and then to bewildered incomprehension. Provincial? Yes, and it's the raw material for the alchemy of art to turn into gold. I'm sorry London's missing it. □

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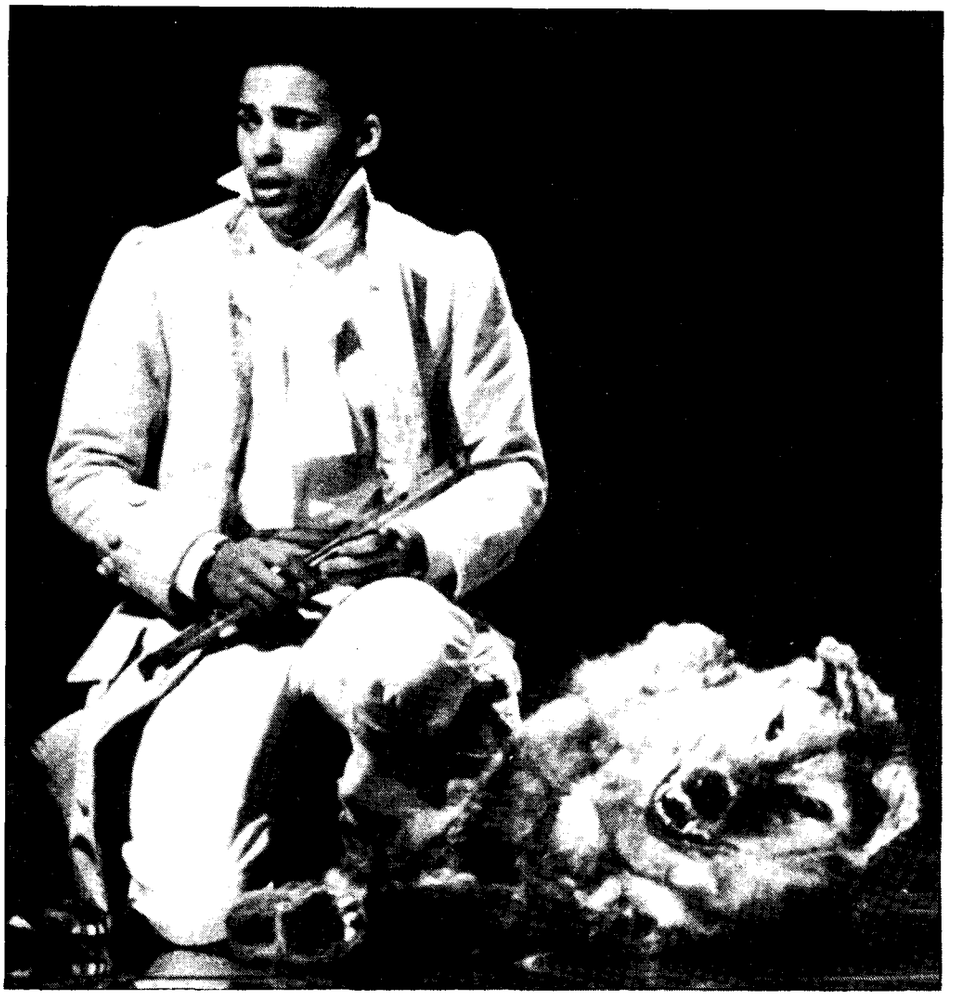

Thomas Randle's Tamino: at the centre of the opera and on top of a bear

OPERA

Famous last notes

Andrew Clements

The Magic Flute
Coliseum
1791: Mozart's Last Year
H.C. ROBBINS LANDON *Thames & Hudson* £12.95

SOONER OR LATER one of Nicholas Hytner's opera productions will misfire. But none has yet: his spectacular success as the most gifted of the younger British directors continues. And the staging of **The Magic Flute** that he has mounted for ENO must be pronounced an almost unqualified triumph.

Mozart's last *Singspiel* has proved surprisingly hard to produce satisfactorily of late; it resists wholesale relocation more than the Da Ponte operas and finding a convincing, unselfconscious approach — which stays within the parameters of period and place, yet resists the temptation to turn it into an unashamed romp — has defeated many producers.

Hytner and his designer Bob Crowley stick close to the 18th-century baseline, blurring the definition where necessary. The setting is austere — a glassy floor and marbled walls, with panels of Egyptian pictograms looming in for second-act ceremonials — the costumes happily mix non-specific ritual dress (for Sarastro's brethren) and vaguely Grecian tunics and frocks for Tamino and Pamina. Papagena appears first as a tea-lady complete with trolley; the birdcatcher and his bride are borne aloft to nuptial bliss in an overgrown nest. Slavish naturalism is resisted.

What this production registers is that *The Magic Flute* remains above all a work of enlightenment, with both capital and lower-case "e": the temple entrances are boldly emblazoned with "Nature", "Wisdom" and "Reason" and Tamino's personal journey of discovery, catalysed by Pamina, is placed at the centre of the opera. Such a clearly focused perspective is underlined by the refreshingly detailed Tamino from Thomas Randle; his voice is not always ideally weighted, but every move and every gesture are fitted into a convincing scheme.

Helen Field's Pamina is not yet quite there; it is a severe, tightly disciplined portrayal — and, as such, a welcome antidote to the all-smiling, winsome view of the part that might be made to serve in a less perceptive production — but she remains too impersonal and aloof, keeping her emotions on a tight rein even to the end.

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Around them are placed an array of characters in whom experience has already informed innocence. Sarastro and his community (Quaker, some of the costumes suggest) are warm-heartedly human: there is nothing forbidding about them, and Sarastro's first appearance at his return from hunting is turned into a kind of harvest festival, in which Gwynne Howell's beatific High Priest is fixed firmly into a caring society. (All of Hytner's villains here are heavily caricatured, the Three Ladies as much as Monostatos and the Queen of Night.) John Rawnsley's Papageno is equally certain, in his own way, of what he wants; the comedy naturally pivots about him and the well studied Yorkshire twang that he adopts, and the joyous one-liners and puns of Jeremy Sams' new English translation, give the dialogue continual vitality. This is an exceptionally witty *Flute*, and much of that success is Rawnsley's. But Hytner registers every aspect of the work in some way or other and finds practical theatrical solutions to nearly all the problems. Even the trials by fire and water, generally the dramatic lowpoint of the second act, are turned to positive account.

The genesis of *The Magic Flute* naturally takes up a good portion of Robbins Landon's **1791: Mozart's Last Year** — though anyone turning to this account for a musical introduction to the opera, or indeed to any of the products of that year, will be disappointed. Musical commentary is entirely excluded from the survey, quite deliberately; the book sets out to answer as many of the riddles and dispel at least a quotient of the myths that surround the final days of what Landon describes as "music's greatest genius".

It is a fascinating piece of exposition, presented in a style that should not put off a general reader; as an introduction to the current techniques of historical musicology it has a fascination in itself, apart from the intrinsic interest of the subject. The book began, the preface reveals, as a response to Shaffer's *Amadeus* and an attempt to prevent the stereotype of the composer enshrined there from becoming too embedded, but Landon has approached the task from a unique and immensely rewarding perspective. As the foremost Haydn scholar of the day, he has been able to draw upon that fund of knowledge to fill in the gaps in Mozartian knowledge. So, when calculating Mozart's likely income in 1791, he can base his estimates upon payments made to Haydn for similar works; the balance sheet that he constructs shows that, at the beginning of the year at least, Mozart's economic prospects were fair, though just why he should have ended his life so weighed down by debt remains unclear.

The Vienna in which Mozart lived and died comes into sharp focus here; so does the Masonic network of which Mozart (like Haydn) was a member, and whose threatened persecution determined the subject of *The Magic Flute*. Other familiar riddles — the enigmatic commissioning of the Requiem, the final illness, the later villification of Constanze Mozart — are thoroughly aired. Landon brings together a carefully ordered selection of recent Mozart scholarship, all of it fully acknowledged, and adds well-founded and intelligent speculation and research of his own. There are still unfinished areas of the portrait; the music continues to speak for itself, but Landon has illuminated many obscure corners of the personal tragedy with great perception. □

JAZZ

A gentle man

Charles Fox

GIL EVANS, *bandleading composer, died at the end of last month. We celebrate the man and the music.*

"WE HARDLY needed any music. The guitar player struck a chord, just like that. I played around with it. Suddenly the whole band was into it — ensembles, everything — for about ten minutes, all improvised. It was amazing. You don't know how intimate you can become after a while. And the next night, the same. We did another number like that."

Gil Evans, the deviser of the most elaborate scores for Claude Thornhill and Miles Davis, was recollecting with delight how his latterday sidemen would take over. Anyone who say him on stage, diffident but integral, not so much conducting his band as holding a few fingers up from time to time, maybe pointing at somebody to take a solo, will recognise the formula.

That conversation took place five years ago, not long after Gil had celebrated his 70th birthday. He was staying at the YMCA on Great Russell Street, just a short stroll from Ronnie Scott's Club. After decades of scuffling — despite those celebrated LPs with Miles Davis — he was getting the kind of work, film scores for instance, that paid well.

When he died three Sundays ago — on holiday with Dexter Gordon and his wife in Mexico, recuperating after what had seemed to be a successful operation — he was probably more prosperous than at any time in his curiously haphazard career. One act of unwitting generosity had been to devote most of his records to other people's tunes, even if those were totally transformed (recomposed is a more precise way of putting it). "It was a loser's game," Gil admitted, "I never got any royalties except the original fee for the arrangement. But I was enjoying it and I never thought about the fact that I wouldn't be getting any cheques later on. As a result I'll have to work all my life. Which is O.K."

My first attempt to get in touch with Gil was in 1959, soon after he'd made the LPs with Miles Davis. I was writing a piece about his music for a collection of essays and needed to ask questions. Six months later a Christmas card arrived, with an evasive message. Nothing prepared me, in short, for the rambling and relaxed conversations we were to have once I'd met him face to face in 1978.

Even then things could have gone awry, for it was at 9.30 on the Sunday morning after the famous Festival Hall concert that my producer and I turned up to interview Gil for the BBC at the White House Hotel. Unknown to us, Gil and his wife Anita had celebrated that triumph by going to Ronnie Scott's, only getting to bed at around 4 a.m. But, after apologising for not inviting us to his room, Gil sat down and ate breakfast while enlarging on such recherché topics as the fact that Skinnay Ennis, the singer who in the 1930s took over Gil's first band, had choked to death on a piece of lettuce ("Nobody realised that the correct thing to do was to punch him in the stomach").

Gil's earliest musical heroes were Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines, but he also admired the records of Ray Noble ("a great arranger") made before he left Britain for the USA. More recently there was Jimi Hendrix, a handful of whose compositions became a regular part of the band's repertoire. Totally self-educated musically, Gil started out by copying dance bands he heard on the radio. Not until he arrived in New York with Claude Thornhill's Orchestra did he catch up on classical music. "I'd heard records, of course. But then I went to the New York Public Library and got out scores by Ravel and Debussy and De Falla. Mussorgsky too, and the other Russians. After all, I was familiar with Fletcher Henderson and Don Redman. What I needed were harmonies with more of an edge, more spice to them. But the thing that really hit me was Bloch's "Schelomo". He called it a Hebrew Rhapsody for Cello, yet it's really full of blues — but from a different culture."

Charlie Parker was one of the regular visitors — others were Gerry Mulligan, Miles Davis and John Lewis — to the one-room apartment Gil occupied close to 52nd Street, and he once stayed in bed there for three or four days ("He'd been beaten up by the police").

A man who grumbled scarcely at all, Gil did resent Norman Granz cutting short a record session at which Gil put Charlie Parker alongside woodwinds and the Dave Lambert Singers ("We needed to rehearse the numbers — and in the middle Max Roach had to dash off for an hour to do a concert"). He also wished more time had been allotted to the three LPs with Miles Davis. "Each was made at just three three-hour sessions, with no rehearsals — except 'Sketches of Spain', where we had four sessions. So there were a few mistakes. It was lucky that all the musicians were familiar with the style."

Yet Gil Evans also saw perils in that kind of familiarity. Indeed, a clue to the abiding vitality of the work of this bandleading composer (and how important that adjective is) lay in his attitude to rhythm: "I'm not too crazy about playing historically," he said, "so when we do tunes by Charlie Parker or Monk I don't want the rhythm section to play what they feel *should* belong there if it doesn't happen to be part of their own lives. Because most of the people playing with me weren't even born when those tunes were written. Otherwise it becomes like a duty. And, as I told them on the way to the airport, I want my music to be duty free!" □

Moscow spring

Connie Bensley

In the Kuskova gardens
workmen lift the wooden boxes
from the delicate statues.

Tender bushes are unwrapped
from their overcoats; twigs unbend
in the melting light.

The men warm to their work,
hang their fur hats
in a row on the fence.

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Language of violence

Patricia Holland, London SW8

Northern Ireland seems to offer journalists and politicians an outlet for their worst emotions — a chance to relish by proxy the violence they so casually condemn. In an issue (*NS* 25 March) in which Ben Pimlott drew attention to this language and to its work in presenting a social and political issue as a moral one, it was distressing to find Edward Pearce seeking the same cheap effects.

To refer to the West Belfast funeral crowd as a "lynch mob" (as if their *aim* were killing) and to follow a mention of Gerry Adams with "Back in civilised company" not only insults those thousands who voted for Gerry Adams and for whom the funeral was a legitimate public expression of grief and anger, but also reminds the rest of us that we need not take those people seriously. This is a use of language to block understanding. We deplore it in the *Express, Mail, Sun* and the rest. It is equally unacceptable in the *New Statesman*.

Dorothy Macedo, London, NW4

The majority of the British people want Britain to leave; the majority of the Irish people want reunification. Of course, the governments in Dublin and London, representing as they do their respective ruling classes, do not — but why should this bother socialists?

Instead of advising our ruling class how best to run its last colony, socialists should be arguing for self-determination for the Irish — a basic democratic principle. Britain has had 800 years to get it right in Ireland — the results speak for themselves. Will it take another 800 years for the left in Britain to wake up?

Not so menacing

Andrew McIntosh, House of Lords, London SW1

I certainly don't want to defend the infamous Clause 28 against Francis Wheen (*NS* 25 March). I spoke and voted against it in principle and in detail when it was before the House of Lords, and I was delighted to persuade almost all my Labour colleagues to vote against the clause as a whole.

But it will *not* be a criminal offence for his homosexual teacher friend to "promote homosexuality" intentionally or otherwise. Nobody can use the clause to tell teachers what to do. The clause only prohibits *local authorities* from intentionally promoting homosexuality. In practice, successive Tory acts have virtually removed the power of local authorities to promote anything much. Even the tamed Haringey policy of promoting positive images of gays and lesbians didn't actually reach the classrooms. The 1986 Education Act left these matters in the hands of governing bodies, and in Haringey no governing body took the council's lead. And even governing bodies can't force teachers to pretend they are heterosexual.

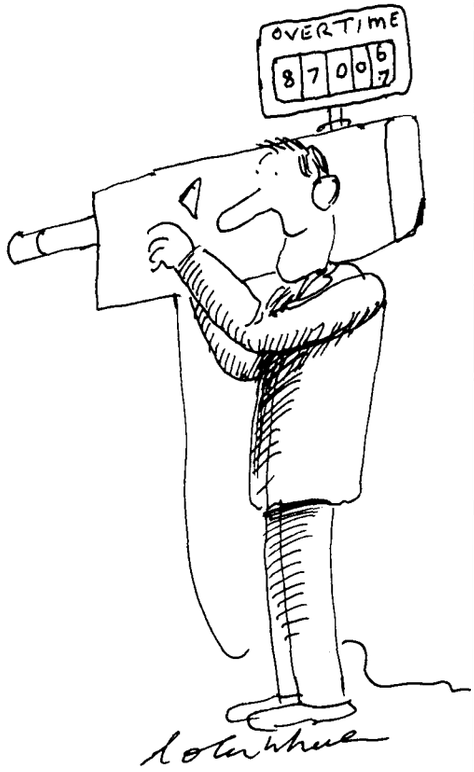
Something similar applies, with less clarity or security, to works of art and literature. Local authorities can put on, or financially support, plays or films, and can issue books from libraries, which are homosexual, or even "promote homosexuality" as long as the intention of the local authority (not the author or actor) is not to "promote homosexuality". And we have ministers' assurances, for what they're worth, that, for example, gay switchboards or counselling services don't "promote homosexuality".

It should not be in law at all, and it's still potentially dangerous; but it's not quite as menacing as Francis Wheen thinks.

£92,000 overtime

Jonathan Miller, Media Editor, Sunday Times, *London E1*

Julian Petley's analysis (*NS* 25 March) of the television industry's efforts to rid itself of counter-productive working practices contained the false allegation that the *Sunday Times* had exaggerated ACTT profligacy in our articles reporting the £92,000 overtime claim of a technician at Zeebrugge. The story was not exaggerated at all. Petley's claim that the story was planted on the *Sunday Times* by *TV-am* management is also untrue. *TV-am* in fact denied the story at the time, and Bruce Gyngell only recently admitted to me that we had it right.



One other claim in Petley's article needs to be answered. This is that newspaper reporting on the television unions is related to the media interests of editors and proprietors. This is really rather facile. If Rupert Murdoch spent his time telling me what to write (which he does not), it would surely be in his interest to tell me to write nothing at all about ITV's problems. This would allow the ITV companies to continue with their wasteful practices, leaving them sitting ducks for whatever new channels he may plan to launch in the future.

Battle for Human Rights

Robert Chambers, Secretary General, British Section International Society for Human Rights, London WC1

Contrary to the statement that we have "now joined the tug-of-war for hearts and minds over Nicaragua", (*NS* 18 March) the ISHR has in fact worked in solidarity with Nicaragua's only independent human rights commission, the Permanent Commission on Human Rights (CPDH), based in Managua, since 1984. The CPDH was formed in 1977. The first case which they adopted for action was that of Tomas Borge, then imprisoned by the Somoza regime and now the Sandinista Interior Minister. The CPDH was accused by Somoza of being founded by Cuba and two of the Commission members were shot by government-backed death squads.

In August 1978 the Sandinista rebels endorsed the CPDH as "truly representing the interests of the Nicaraguan people". In 1979 and 1980 the newly installed Marxist government carried out mass killings and internments of opponents and in February 1980 declared the CPDH illegal. Although the CPDH is now being allowed to operate, it remains gravely threatened, its reports are banned and its staff are harassed and arrested. However, with the international support of all seventeen sections of the ISHR it has been possible for the information which the CPDH has collated to reach the West.

On the matter concerning SWAPO, ISHR has worked hard for the release of thousands of young Namibians imprisoned by SWAPO in Angola and Zambia. Our campaign is not yet over as SWAPO have never released the individuals concerned, nor explained their fate, nor justified the executions carried out by SWAPO in Luanda in January 1987.

Finally, your article says that the UN is trying to sue ISHR for the use of its logo. The ISHR uses the UN logo because the basis of our statute is the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The ISHR has already obtained permission from the UN to use the logo and so your comment appears strange, to say the least. The reason for ISHR existing is that the majority of the United Nations members so regularly violate this declaration.

Free puff

Jillian Becker, Director, Institute for the Study of Terrorism, London W1

Far from being a shadowy organisation as your Diary columns alleged (*NS* 4 March), we positively seek publicity, since we exist to provide information on terrorism and the more people who know about us the better. I therefore thank you for helping us in this aim.

As for our publication on *Terrorism in Sri Lanka* being "wildly inaccurate", I should be most grateful to your diarist Francis Wheen if he would point out our inaccuracies to us so that we may correct them.

Budget coverage

E. Atkin, London NW3

Your coverage of the recent budget (*NS* 18 March), while hardly surprising surely does little credit to a journal of your standing.

To publish a bar chart showing the tax savings brought about by the budget in £s, with reference to various income groups, is pure propaganda which even the feeblest mind can see through. Why do you not publish the same chart showing the amount of tax in £s actually paid by the various groups? It rises far more steeply than the one you published. In reality prior to the budget, someone

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earning 10 times average earnings paid 20 times the tax, whereas now this figure is about 15 times. Hardly the raw material for revolution I would think.

To then get upset about the value of houses which will shortly be left to various heirs is also rather irrational. Over most of the past 40 years, the tax system (especially during periods of Labour government) was biased monumentally against virtually any other form of investment. To pay up to 98 per cent tax on the yield from one's "unearned" investments did not look very attractive against the zero risk, untaxed, capital appreciation offered by the ownership of a principal place of residence. This was even more the case as the private rented sector had been effectively abolished by various governments.

Without the distortions caused by the above, the wealth of the middle classes would be more widely spread over a spectrum of investments and not concentrated in houses and pension rights. If you want property prices to tumble, remove these distortions (as the last budget has started to do), but it is the removal of some of these distortions which seems to be upsetting you so much.

As for John Rentoul's article about the rich (his specialist subject), why should he expect to know what they do, or think, or plan, or feel, anymore than I can relate to the aspirations of an unemployed 20-year-old black in Brixton? I can assure you those with the discretion over their incomes pay more tax when rates are "reasonable". "Reasonable" means different things to different people. However, rest assured that few think 98 per cent is reasonable and more think 40 per cent is reasonable than 60 per cent! Time will tell who is right, but you cannot escape the fact that low tax economies grow more rapidly than high tax economies. To define these is not simply a question of comparing the top rate, as in some countries high top rates are in place but they only come into effect on incomes of several hundred thousand pounds.

The problem to which we all ought to address ourselves in this country is not that some people earn 10 times average earnings, but that there is a vast "subclass" of semi-literate people who cannot earn a quarter of the amount paid to a 28-year-old computer programmer with 5 or 6 years experience. That the senior manager who employs this 28-year-old earns two or three times his salary after 20 years experience does not seem to me to be socially unjust. Let us all do what we can to upgrade this "subclass" and we will build a much fairer and richer society than you will ever do by sniping at Ralph Halpern and his ilk.

Sour joke

Judith Dolley, Basingstoke

Your April Fool article fooled us utterly and I thought it a great joke. But now the joke is turning sour. I find that I still believe it!

Alton's Bill: how Labour's leaders voted

Madeline Simms, London NW11

Amid your extensive coverage about the forthcoming leadership contest, I find it slightly depressing that no mention is made of the stand taken by the various contestants on feminist issues.

Some of your readers and hopefully most of your women readers, may nonetheless consider this matter to be of some importance and may wish to be reminded of the way the various candidates voted on the most recent feminist issue, namely David Alton's Abortion (amendment) Bill on 22 January of this year.

Neil Kinnock voted with the feminists, as did Tony Benn, Eric Heffer and John Prescott. Roy Hattersley, on the other hand, did not turn up to vote as he was abroad. He informed a *Guardian* correspondent who interviewed him about this matter that had he been present he would have supported David Alton and voted to make legal abortion more difficult to obtain.

Birmingham 6

Edward Farrelly, Foxrock, Co. Dublin

I would like to thank the NS for the article by Paul Foot (*NS* 8 Feb) while deploring the immense fickleness of the British and Irish media for allowing the sad case of the Six to drop from sight. In a show of support for their cause letters or cards from well-wishers would, I think, be very welcome. Their address is: Long Larten, South Littleton, Eveshaw, Worcs WR11 5TZ, UK.

Our Ken

Steve Cohen, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Surely the only question we should be asking about the Leadership campaign is whether it is worth the unions spending £1 million of much needed political funds to ballot their members on an election designed to see if Ken Livingstone will vote for Tony Benn or Neil Kinnock.

Hypocrisy

Matthew Huntbach, Young Liberals National Executive, London E13

At the recent SLD Launch Rally, Robert Maclennan spoke of the Alliance pressing Trade Union reforms on the government, then immediately expressed his contempt for those who could not accept a single union deal for Fords at Dundee. Is it not a gross hypocrisy that those who opposed the closed shop in the name of freedom of choice, and who claim to be building a party based on the idea of choice, are not equally defending the right of workers to a free choice of the Union they wish to join?

Gremlins

Ben Harte, New York

Before I chew my fingers off, who really doesn't know the difference between "comfort" and "comport" (*NS* 11 March) — Lord Arran, Lord Henderson or Sarah Benton?

Ed note: The sentence we printed as "He then asked the homosexual people in the future to comfort themselves quietly and with dignity" should, of course, have read "comport". The error lies with none of those named but amongst the anonymous typesetters and proof readers.

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Weekend competition

No 3020 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

Suppose that, instead of *New Society*, the *Statesman* were to merge with another magazine: the *Tatler, Good Housekeeping, Horse and Hound,* the *Lady*, the *Police Gazette*, *Just 17* . . . Could we have extracts from regular features which might result from such amalgamations? Max. 120 words by 20 April.

No 3017 **Set by Gray Dorn**

Epigramatic reviews. (Originally set by Eric Stockdale.)

Report **By Rosie Hughes**

What an exciting week. First, dear Keith, you've made an old woman blush to the colour of her name. You *shouldn't* have (but thank you). Second, a response from Eric Stockdale — sorry, your worship, His Honour Judge Eric Stockdale — to Gray's enquiry as to where he is now. "What do you mean, where am I now?" his noble lordship enquires. "I have not moved since April 1968 — the *New Statesman* has . . . I take it I am allowed to enter your new competition?" Not only enter, your Excellence, but win an entire £2 for your entry — as do the other reviewers (selected from well over 60 contestants: could it be Gray, sweet boy, who can't count?) whose handiwork is printed below.

The Hite Report: Bed — and bored.
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

The Name of the Rose: Dog?
W.J. WEBSTER

Sammy and Rosie Get Laid: So do carpets.
Rocky: Agreed.
Airport: Terminal.
WILL BELLENGER

Barfly: Vino very trash.
G. GOATLEY

Phantom of the Opera: Saw through it.
IAN BROWN

8½: Nein.
NOEL PETTY

Cry Freedom: Boered to tears.
Full Metal Jacket: HEV-VY
KATIE MALLETT

Dallas: Ditchwater.
ERIC STOCKDALE

Casablanca: Vichy's triangle.
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

The White Hotel: Spunky.
Nineteen Eighty Four: Passé
VALERIE MOORE

Joe Haines' *Maxwell:* Boss-eyed.
BOB SCOTT

Chess: Stale, mate.
M.E. BURTON*

Maurice: Minor.
Manon des Sources: Well, well, well.
LISSA EVANS

Les Misérables: Chacun à son égout.
DAVID HEATON

Nite Club Confidential: Tright.
PETER VEALE

Waiting for Godot: Two characters in seach of an other.
GERARD BENSON

The Last Emperor: Promises, promises.
T. GRIFFITHS

---

* *Or M.C. Burnes, or M.C. Bute (your writing isn't* totally *legible).*

Weekend Crossword 1591

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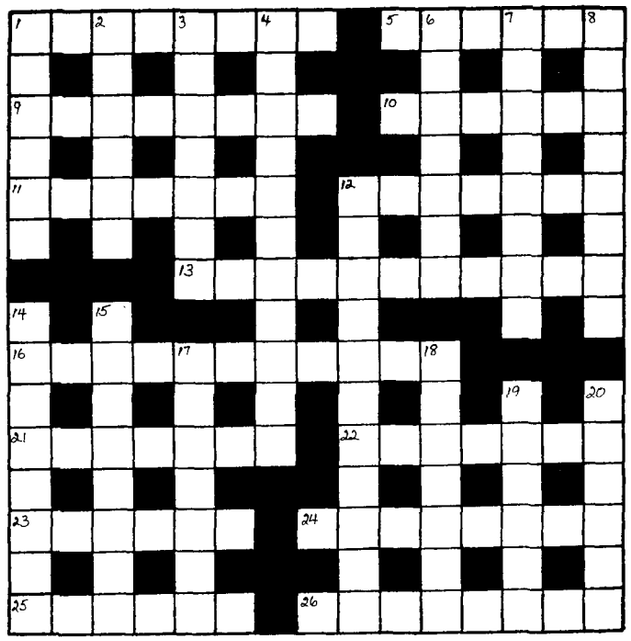


Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

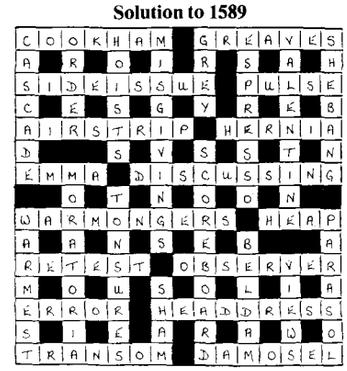
1. Complete view of a girl being embraced by parents (8)
5. A matter of the heart has a following with the beautiful (6)
9. A score of cars needed by the department? (8)
10. Cave in as a result of talking rot to each other (6)
11. Child that is appearing in a gathering for song (7)
12. Had a meal interrupted by a northerner and got excited (7)
13. Fat customer discovered by insect (11)
16. Fighter turns solid during a game (11)
21. Was in charge and finished with a saying (7)
22. Unfavourable line of propaganda (7)
23. Ancient mode which keeps one alone (6)
24. Old man without opening for a lay (8)
25. Pulling for victory by German leader (6)
26. Part of Wales which gives the reverse of approval to an old Englishman (8)

DOWN

1. Stone needed when one animal's tail is cut off by others (6)
2. Messenger discovers one among a company pursuing a single woman (6)
3. A runner enters the arena, taking a chance (7)
4. Just the flower to spoil the display either side of the road (11)
6. A mix-up put right in the remote past (7)
7. The religious leader is opposed to a poet (8)
8. Makes fresh request for instruments without a C (8)
12. Translating fiction as an ability to charm (11)
14. Provide with trees for the king to climb higher than the others (8)
15. Food mentioned in King's Regulations? (8)
17. Put up with the disgrace in which we are found (7)
18. Great batsman in genuine recovery (7)
19. Ancient letters on a page looking like fruit (6)
20. Love hunting (6)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1589



Prizewinners to 1589

John Cooper (Grays, Essex)
Eileen Hall (Goring, W. Sussex)
Dr D. Hunter Smith (Carlisle)

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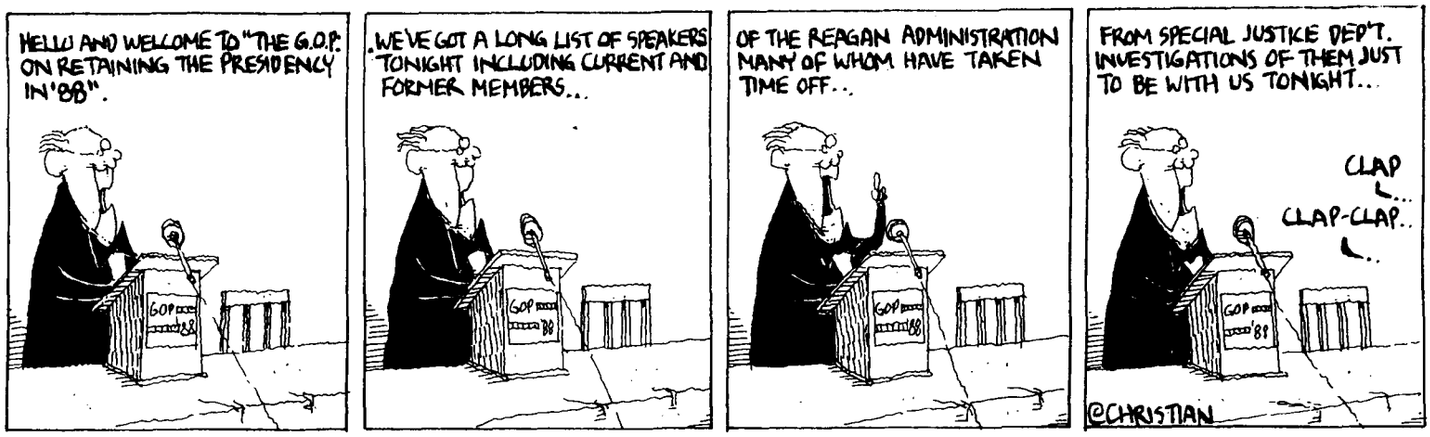
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Chess

APRIL 1st was the beginning of the new order in international chess, the first round of the first tournament in the *World Cup grand prix*. One way or another, it's going to be a memorable date. Well, we wouldn't forget the anniversary of the day on which the GLC was wound up, would we? The SWIFT World Cup tournament in Brussels is a rather frightening prospect for different reasons. Will it complement and enhance the rest of the international chess scene? Or will this SWIFT turn out to be a cuckoo that destroys fellow nestlings?

The name of the company that sponsors the tourney and sports that acronym is "*Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications*". What else would banks communicate about? Still, quite apart from the fact that "SWIT" wouldn't have the same ring to it, there's something appropriate in the pleonasm. The Grandmasters Association has initiated the World Cup as a financial operation with the basic objective of changing chess from a poor man's game to a big money sport. The winner of the *grand prix* will scoop $100,000 and in addition there is a prize fund for each tournament along the way — in Brussels it's $108,000. Success in these events will deserve to be highly rewarded, given the unrelenting strength of the field. Of the 18 competitors, only two are ranked beneath the 2590 + super-GM level.

If this were just another extremely strong tournament, one would pick Karpov as clear favourite to win, in Kasparov's absence. But those who have been eliminated from the world championship cycle — such as Beliavsky, Korchnoi, Nunn, Salov, Seirawan, Tal and Vaganian — may be expected to put a greater effort into the World Cup than those who still have an interest in the supreme prize.

Ljubojevic is one of these dangerous men with a point to prove — and the ability to beat anyone, as he showed in a game that was crucial for Short's victory in Amsterdam:

Ljubojevic-Karpov, Euwe Memorial 1988. Caro-Kann Defence.
1 e4 c6 2. d3 e5 3. Nd2 Nf6 4. Ngf3 d6 5. g3 g6 6. Bg2 Bg7 7. 0-0 0-0 8. a4 Nbd7. A "nothing opening" — of no interest to theory, but in practice it leaves everything to play for. **9. a5 Re8 10. b4 Rb8 11. Bb2 b5 12. axb6 axb6 13. Ra7 Bb7 14. c4 Qc7 15. Qb3 Ra8 16. Rxa8 Bxa8 17. Ra1 d5 18. cxd5 cxd5** The position still looks quite equal, but Ljubo spots a chance for tactical tricks on the white diagonals. **19. Ng5 Qd6 20. exd5 Bxd5 21. Nc4 Qc6 22. Ne3! Bxb3 23. Bxc6 h6 24. Ra3 hxg5 25. Rxb3 Bf8 26. Kg2 Re6** Clever play has netted White the bishop-pair. One would have thought Black could still hold this position — particularly, if Black is Karpov. But in what follows the White Rook penetrates, while Black's just shuffles awkwardly in the e-file. **27. Bb5 Kg7 28. h3 Be7 29. Bc3 Bd6 30. Ra3 Bb8 31. Ra8 Re7 32. Bd2 e4 33. d4 Bc7 34. Rc8 Nf8 35. Bc3 N8h7 36. Bc6 Nf8 37. b5 1-0.** Karpov lost on time: the deadly Bb4 is threatened, and if 37 . . . Bd6 38. Nc4.

This was the third time Ljubo had beaten Karpov. His first win came in the 1982 Turin tournament from *Diagram A*: **30 . . . Ba4?** I suppose Karpov did not like 30 . . . Rab8 31. Qd2 and d6 is likely to fall. But it is even worse to give White command of the b-file. **31. Rd2 Rab8 32. Rdb2 Rxb2 33. Rxb2 f6 34. Rb6 Qc7 35. Nh2 Bc6 36. Ng4 Rf8 37. f3 f5 38. exf5 Rxf5 39. Qd2 Kg7 40. Rxa6 e4 41. fxe4 Rf7 42. e5! Qc8 43. Qh6 + Kh8 44. e6 Rg7 45. Rb6 1-0.**

The second win, scored at the last Olympiad, was the best. In *Diagram B* Ljubo has captured a pawn, but seems to be in trouble because of the pin in the a-file, not to mention the loose pawns on b2 and d3. He moves into Houdini-mode to wriggle free to victory: **23. b3! d4** Against 23 . . . Qxd3 Ljubo had 24. Rd1 Qb5 25. c4. But what now? If 24. cxd4? Bb4!. **24. Nc4! Rxa4 25. bxa4 Qb3 26. cxd4 exd4 27. Bxd4 Qd3 28. Ne5 Nxe5 29. Bxe5 Rc8 30. Qd1 Qa6 31. Bb2 h6 32. Re4 Qb7 33. Qd4** and thanks to his passed a-pawn and well centralised pieces Ljubo won the ending.

Solution to diagram B of 25 March [8/ K3b3/ 6pQ/ 7p/ R3p2q/ 1N1kBn1N/np RP3p/3B4], a mate in 2 by V. Savchenko (1977), got squeezed out last week. The key was: **1. Qg5.** If 1 . . . Qxg5. 2. Nf2 or if 1 . . . Bxg5 2. Nc5.

Diagram A:
Ljubojevic-Karpov, Turin 1982

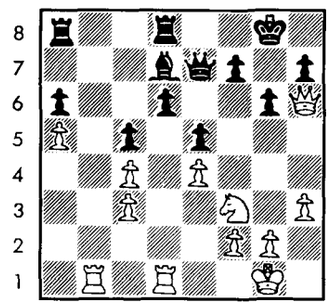
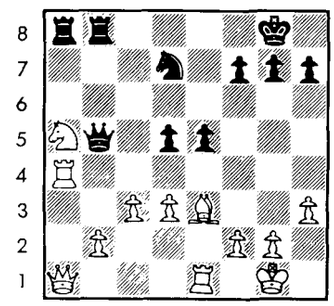


Diagram B:
Ljubojevic-Karpov, Dubai Olympiad 1986



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☐ British Rail is to spend £12,500 on publicizing the scenic Leeds-Settle-Carlisle line and the Pennine route from Leeds to Morecambe, even though it wants to close the 72-mile stretch from Settle to Carlisle. – *The Times* (Leonard Cox)

☐ Teresa Gorman, Tory member for Billericay, already established as an eccentric, has now revealed more grounds for suspicion. Mrs Gorman likes earthworms. "I love my little earthworms," she told the House Magazine. "They are the free enterprise militants of the underground. They busy themselves in a thoroughly desirable Thatcherite way." — *Sunday Mirror* (George Moor)

☐ Peace worker Miss Barbara Eggleston was acquitted of trying to draw crosses on the Ministry of Defence building in Whitehall during an Ash Wednesday peace protest. She told the court she managed to scatter some blessed ash on the ground as she was led away by PC Darren Birmingham. She added: "Unfortunately some spilled over his shoes, but I explained that it had been blessed." — *Oxford Mail* (Pat Hartridge)

☐ The Bishop of Guildford, in his maiden speech, said he was concerned at the lack of basic equipment in some hospitals. Recently he had been taken to the casualty department of a London teaching hospital and could not be given pyjamas despite being admitted to a mixed ward. — *Guardian* (Unity Johnson)

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